

WARP



WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 8, Number 4

Winter 2001

Learning Batik in Bali, Indonesia

by Amanda Cater

Sitting on a cushion on the floor, I carefully applied the wax to create a batik. In the street, children played, people walked by or stopped and chatted with my teacher. The atmosphere was very relaxed, almost meditative. I was in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia for 6 weeks (Aug. 17-Sept. 30, 2001) to celebrate the beginning of my 60th year.



Normally, I travel with groups who do volunteer work, usually in a developing country. But this time I wanted something different. I chose Bali because it is a place in which there is a high value on art and beauty. Historically, everyone engaged in mask making, painting, dance, music, weaving, or stone carving. In fact, there was no word for art or artist because everyone did it. With the invasion of tourists, the emphasis on art is changing slightly, but in the city of Ubud, it is still the main focus.

For the first two weeks, my husband and I toured the back roads of the island with Danu Tours (www.danutours.com). We learned about the culture and a bit of the Indonesian language. Through my tour guide, I met Nyoman Warta who became my batik teacher for 4 weeks after my husband returned home.

I rented an apartment near his studio. Class times were very flexible, so I simply decided when I wanted to work and then spent 3-4 hours/day learning the techniques of batik. I was thrilled with my first effort and quickly planned several more designs so while one piece was drying, I started on the next. Over the 4 weeks, I completed 8 pieces, including two silk scarves. I had brought the silk (from Dharma Trading Company) with me. Nyoman gave me written instructions and I brought home dyes, the small pans for melting wax and parafin, and 6 tjantings (the tool for applying wax).

In addition, the last week I also learned the technique of stamping patterns and then dyeing the cloth. Stamps are called *caps* (*chops*). Both techniques are time consuming and require much more intricacy than I normally like in my artwork, but they became fascinating.

Nyoman's studio is part of the family compound, so in addition to learning batik, I also observed the daily life of his family. His mother spent many hours every day cooking in the mud-walled kitchen and his father often played with or entertained his young son. For the women, much of each day is spent in preparing offerings and then placing them in the family temple, the village temple and elsewhere. I saw the prepara-

Continued on page 13

Mission Statement

To facilitate self-empowerment and betterment of women and communities-in-need through textile arts.

Goals

To foster dialogue and support within the organization

To serve as a clearinghouse for information, resources, and technical assistance within the international textile community

To provide cross-cultural education and support within the textile community

To provide guidance in the realities of appropriate assistance

To promote appreciation of textiles which reflect a community's culture

To enrich the lives of individuals in the global textile community through cross-cultural exchange

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Save these dates and plan to travel....

May 10-12, 2002

**10th WARP Annual Meeting
Black Forest Conference Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado**

From the WARP Office....

Cheryl Musch

You'll see a lot of new members in this newsletter. In the aftermath of September 11, Linda Ligon appealed to us in *Handwoven* to "take solace in the continuity of thread," highlighting WARP as a way to connect with textile workers - weavers, spinners, and knitters - around the world. That connection, and our ability to share our experiences, is what makes WARP unique. We want to offer a warm welcome to our new members who come to share our experiences and our desire to assist textile communities in need.

As we approach the new year, the Board and I would like to thank Linda Temple for her fantastic work on the newsletter in 2001. Linda has been doing the newsletter since 1999 and every issue is packed with fascinating articles. Thank you Linda!

Artists Stitch Prayer Shawl With Love

WARP member Dorothy Gill Barnes, who participated in the "New Works 2001" weekend at Haystack, told me about this experience. Louise Todd Cope, who inspired the project, kindly responded to my request for more information with the letter below. LT

It was only seven days after the heartbreaking events of September 11th that 50 craftspeople gathered at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Maine to attend a long weekend session titled "New Works 2001." We were all confronting the magnitude and tragedy of this act of violence and feeling stunned by its devastation and possible consequences. At the same time we were grateful to be together. But we had not known before arriving at the school that the brother of Stuart Kestenbaum [Haystack's Director] had been killed in the catastrophe. That added a very personal dimension to the tragedy.

How do we begin the healing process, especially when it contained such enormous grief? As a group we decided that we would make a memorial prayer shawl for Stuart, hoping it would be a comfort for him and his family. And the making of it it proved to be a healing for us.

We invited each participant to stitch one line across the prayer shawl, each stitch in the line holding their prayers. Hoping and believing that our prayers would find their way to Stuart through this cloth.

The prayer shawl was placed on a table in the weaving studio with an assortment of threads and needles beside it. Quietly during the next three days people would come one by one, reverently thread the needle to stitch their prayers across the cloth. It was deeply touching to see tiny needles held in the hands of big men who I suspect had not previously participated in this craft. A gentleness surrounded the table.

We mourn for 5000, we mourn for one brother, and there on the prayer shawl we could stitch our love. Blessings, Louise.

[Fiber artist Louise Todd Cope, who founded the "Cloak the Earth" project, lives in Berkeley and can be reached at LToddcope@aol.com.]

Member Profile...

Karen Searle: Preserving Textile Traditions

by Mary Kelly

One of WARP's founding members is also one of the most active in promoting travel-to-learn opportunities. Karen Searle is an artist, writer, and lover of textiles. She has had a life-long fascination with fibers, particularly clothing and sculptural works.

In the early 1970's, Karen established *Dos Tejedoras Fiber Arts Publications*, which produced 18 award-winning books on cultural craft traditions, including *Finishes in the Ethnic Tradition*, *Latvian Mittens*, and *Andean Folk Knitting*. She also published and edited *The Weaver's Journal* from 1984-1988 and has written three weaving texts and many articles for craft-related periodicals such as *Ornament*, *FiberArts*, *American Craft* and *Surface Design Journal*.

Karen served on WARP's first Governing Board, from 1994-1997. She says "Although my years in publishing were devoted to preserving cultural traditions in textiles, it never seemed like I could do enough. When I learned that WARP was being formed I was eager to become involved. I worked on the newsletter and served on its board while we were seeking nonprofit status and reconfiguring the organization from an 'organic' structure to a 'legal' one. I created the format for the newsletter that is still being used..."



*Prime of Life-
knit linen figures*

By the mid-1990's, Karen decided to focus less on publishing activities and more on art work. Closing her publishing ventures, she enrolled in an MFA program at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, completing her degree in 1999. Since then her sculptural fiber works have drawn wide attention and have been exhibited in Canada and Korea as well as in the United States. She also teaches classes, lectures, and gives seminars internationally. Karen has served as juror on national shows and judged the International Textile Design Competition in Taegu, Korea in 1997 and 2000.

Karen's special interests lie in Mayan textiles and she leads a Weaving, Textiles, and Craft tour yearly to Guatemala. I was privileged to travel with her several years ago, staying in a delightful villa in Antigua, the old capital, and meeting weavers there. We learned to weave on backstrap looms, visited their villages, and experienced a bit of village life—making food and talking to neighbors and friends. Karen speaks Spanish fluently (and several other languages as well); her language skills, coupled with her textile knowledge, make her uniquely qualified to help weavers from varied cultures communicate with one another.

The Mayan tour, organized by Liza Fourre, Director of Art Workshops in Guatemala, includes visits to regional markets and to the famed textiles at the Museo Ixchel in Guatemala City. More information about this tour is available at www.artguat.org (web site) or info@artguat.org (e-mail), or on WARP's education web site at www.warpeducation.homestead.com. Karen is working on a new textile-based tour to Korea, scheduled for next March, to view both fine art and traditional textile uses.

It's time to renew your WARP membership.

Next year is our 10th anniversary, and we hope you'll continue to be part of WARP's network. Watch your mailbox for a renewal reminder and a form to update your Membership Directory listing. Your WARP membership is paid through the year shown on your mailing label. To be included in the 2002 Annual Membership Directory, renew and return your form to the office by January 31.



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Education site: [http://
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WARP e-group

[http://groups.yahoo.com/
group/WeaveARealPeace](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WeaveARealPeace)

Travel Promotes Discovery; WARP Members Count the Ways . . .

Beth Davis

It's awfully hard for those of us born with the travel bug to explain why we do it. It's kind of like asking us why we breathe. As a very feeble attempt at this impossible task, let me just simply say that for me, travel is a journey in self-discovery. It unlocks parts of me that I never realized existed. Had I never been hiking in Israel, enjoyed herring and snaps with a group of Danish fishermen by the North Sea, wandered through level after level of the Borobudur temple in Indonesia, enjoyed the starry skies during a power outage in Nicaragua, visited the State Fair in Oklahoma, danced the Hambo in Sweden, been a passenger on the London underground, gasped at the majesty of Mt. Rainer in Washington state or the splendor of a New England autumn, picked wild flowers on a mountaintop in Norway, strolled in broad daylight at midnight in Finland, shared the street with cattle carts and elephants in India, dodged the jumping eels and live turtles in Chinese markets, surrounded myself by adobe architecture in Santa Fe, perused the craft stores of Berea, enjoyed the outdoor festivals in Vancouver, taken a whiff of fragrant orange groves in Florida, or been moved by the monuments of Washington DC, then I would only be a fraction of the person I am today. Travel makes me whole, and each time I travel that "whole" gets bigger and bigger.

But that's only half the story! Above all, I travel to explore different cultures and it is gratifying that now that I'm not able to travel as much, I'm still able to do plenty of cross cultural exploring from home. Up until now, I've become involved in all things cross-cultural because it is my passion. These days however, I see it as something urgent. When you immerse yourself in other cultures you realize that yours is not the only way of thinking, of behaving, of eating, of doing almost every single act that you do daily and totally take for granted. Yours is not the only style of music, of clothing, of dancing, of celebrating. As you go through the exhilarating process of taking on new attitudes, interests, and rituals as a result of exposure to other cultures, and as you polish your skills in getting along with people whose lives and beliefs may differ drastically from your own (making some fantastic friends along the way); your life truly becomes the best of many worlds. IF ONLY we could get every person on this earth to start appreciating cultures other than their own, then maybe hatred and mistrust would begin to diminish and the world would finally become a better version of itself. I like to think that my efforts are at least a small step toward that goal.

Beth is now at home with daughter Jana Rose at 164 Split Rock, Acton, MA 01718; bethbox@hotmail.com.

Deborah Chandler

When I was young and still knew everything, on some flight between college and home I had an Army officer as a seat mate. Somehow we got to talking about freedom of thought and religion, and whether or not there really was such a thing in all the world. Steeped in my righteous belief that what one thinks has no bounds or restrictions, I insisted that it didn't matter what a government said, one could still believe in God any way one wanted. Maybe not display it publicly, but believe it. All he said in response was, "Travel. Travel." He implied that I wouldn't understand until I did. At that point I thought I had travelled; after all, I'd been on a two week tour of Europe when I was 16, and to Canada plenty of times. Only years later did I come to understand how right he was.

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Why WARP Members Travel...

continued from page 4

While in the most absolute sense what I'd insisted on is true, it is only so on a purely theoretical basis. The most important thing I needed to learn was how a person's environment shapes how they think. What I didn't know then was how incredible the U.S. is in its buffet of ideas, and that I can pick and choose because there is so much to choose from. A tiny example: when I am in small Mayan villages in Guatemala, and the subject of religion comes up, most of the people identify somewhat with the Catholic Church as they know it. If I mention Judaism, they have no clue what I am saying. If I then say, "The religion of Jesus", if anything they are even more mystified; everyone knows Jesus was Catholic. Other religions, including Eastern religions like Hindu, Sufi, etc, are also just words with no meanings. So it is unlikely that they would think of "God" in any way that might grow from that mixture of perspectives.

Another example: I took a friend's daughter to get new glasses, and the doctor needed to use the drops that would dilate her pupils. Explaining the principle to the mother first required a discussion of how our pupils open and close as the amount of light changes. Rosario, 47, has never been to school, and as I pondered this lesson I wondered how many million other things I probably first learned in school that she has no clue of. And what expansion of thought does that allow me.

For the people of the world to get along, we need to have some understanding of each other's lives. The mis-information on all sides is infinite. (I heard last year that there are no lakes or trees in the US, and that marriage in the US is for only a few months.) If we want that understanding, want to expand our own universe, travel, in person, is one of the best ways to do it. And besides that, for most of us, it's a whole lot of fun.

Deborah can be reached at DeborahWF@aol.com.

Mary Kelly: But Why Travel?

My main reason to travel is that I feel that I cannot adequately write about an area, its textiles, or the people that produce them, unless I am there. This is usually because there is very little written and published about the area, or it is in a language that few people speak. Furthermore, I want to ask questions that most researchers don't or won't ask, and that people don't or won't answer unless they trust you. This takes time, but trust is invaluable in developing an idea of a culture, its people, and their beliefs.

Often, even published authors have eliminated parts of their research because they think that the research community won't want to hear it, but they are perfectly willing to share it once they know of a person's interest. This is particularly true of women, who must have their work published by large presses that don't share their interests. In other areas, talking to village women is something that wasn't done in the past, only the men were interviewed. Naturally this produces a biased idea of a culture.

So actually being there is a prime factor in collecting data, and in recording it. Travel also helps to focus attention on an area and its needs. Many textile areas in the world are functioning in traditional ways and are quite interesting, but few western people know anything about them. Having been there, it is possible to draw attention to them via lectures, articles, and books, which hopefully facilitates better understanding of their culture and textile production. Mary Kelly can be reached at kellym13@juno.com; her web sites are <http://www.geocities.com/marybkelly> and <http://www.marybkelly.homestead.com>.

Next Newsletter

One of WARP's goals is to provide guidance in the realities of appropriate assistance. The next issue of the newsletter will explore how we can effectively provide short term aid (disaster relief, yarn for weavers, etc.) or participate in long term development efforts, particularly within the textile community around the world.

Please send your thoughts and experiences on this topic by **February 1**.

Did you know that Working Assets long distance services donates a portion of its revenue to nonprofit groups working for peace, human rights, equality, education and the environment? In addition, on an annual basis, the company will let you choose a non-profit to receive a \$25 donation from them (WARP received one this year). The company also serves as a strong political force, dedicated to giving its customers the opportunity to speak out on critical public issues. Since 1985, Working Assets has raised \$25 million for progressive nonprofits. These funds come from the top line (sales), not bottom-line (profits), so donations are made whether or not we make a profit. Customers vote for the nonprofit groups to receive funding each year. For more information contact Working Assets at <http://www.workingassets.com/>

Why WARP Members Travel...

Marilyn Anderson: Turning One's Life Inside Out

My interest and concern about indigenous people began when as a child I learned that the area where our family farm was located once had been inhabited by native peoples who had "disappeared." I did not know details of what had happened to them. But it impressed me powerfully that the people who possibly once lived on the very land we called "ours" were extinct.

Only when in Mexico did I began to understand how much I had to learn from indigenous cultures and in turn to reevaluate my own. It meant to turn my life inside out from what I had previously imagined it would be. That started when at 22, I lived with my anthropologist husband in a Chiapas Mayan town. Mayan culture was to become one of the most profound of all influences on my life and work. In the sixties and seventies, then with our two children, we spent several years in a Mayan town in Guatemala. As my husband did linguistic research, I learned about the different crafts and especially concentrated on women's traditional backstrap weaving. As an art school trained painter learning to weave, I found not only that it required different skills and sensibilities, but that even more profound differences involved how Mayan weaving arts were learned, used, and shared as part of tradition. I saw how my individualistic path as an artist contrasted greatly with the communal spirit embodied in the work of Mayan weavers. I learned about the special relationship between art and life as it happens in indigenous cultures. While I studied the arts and crafts of the Maya I also began to understand the political and economic issues of Guatemalan society where extreme inequality in the distribution of wealth rules. In turn, that experience allowed me to analyze my own society in new ways, including the very different role the arts play in our culture.

Among the Maya, the art of the weavers is shared broadly. Day in and day out the beauty and significance of weaving worn as traditional dress continuously affects the weaver-wearer and those surrounding her. As well, the colors and designs signify the wearer's identity and place of origin as well as having symbolic and religious meaning connecting them to thousands of years of traditions. Yet even in the 60s and 70s, I could see how outside forces had begun to change Mayan weaving and, at times women no longer wove mainly for themselves and their families but out of economic necessity for sale to outsiders.

My love of the textile traditions of the Maya led me in the seventies to leave behind my painting and drawing and for twenty years, I instead concentrated on photography, writing and research while I taught part-time to support myself. Instead of living for extended periods in Guatemala, I returned for shorter times to photograph and do research. During those years, with the encouragement and support of my present husband Jon Garlock, I produced two books about the textile traditions of the Maya: *Backstrap Weaving* (with Barbara Tabor) (1975) and *Guatemala Textiles Today*, (1978) In the eighties, a brutal civil war erupted in Guatemala. Jon and I joined with many others to do "solidarity work" and to do education about the rampant human rights abuses taking place. We mounted, traveled an exhibit and produced a book of the same name: *Granddaughters of Corn* with my photographs of Mayan women and the writing and editing of Jon. The text detailed the effect of the war and repression in Guatemala on the lives of Maya women. The exhibit is still traveled by the Unitarian Church, (UUSC) in Boston MA.

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Why WARP Members Travel...

Marilyn Anderson: Turning One's Life Inside Out *continued from page 6*

In the early nineties, I left my teaching position, and returned to painting, drawing and printmaking, which I had been longing to do. In 1997, I began to work along with the Consejo Maya Jun Apju Ixb'alamke to produce a coloring book to promote the appreciation of the Maya arts and crafts traditions of Guatemala.

As part of a small pilot educational project, called Pro Arte Maya, begun only in January 2001, these materials were distributed to students and teachers in six bilingual schools sponsored by the Consejo Maya and one additional school in Guatemala. Marilyn Anderson, 34 Nicholson Street, Rochester, NY 14620; 716/271-4374; manderson@igc.org

Donna Duke: Why Weavers Travel

- to experience weaving techniques in the original setting
- to learn the conditions in which weavers worked
- to learn which family members are traditionally involved and whether weaving work is gender related (for example, Ghanaian Kente cloth traditions are handed down from father to son)
- to learn how much weaving is valued by the community
- to learn different methods
- to discover the themes and motifs have been constant to their work
- to see how some have incorporated political events into their weaving (for example, during Nazi occupation the weaver wove her feelings and reactions of loss of civil rights into her tapestries; similarly the Afghan war rugs produced in the 1980's),

The other side of the coin is the effect of the visitors on the weavers, docents, and teachers. As the Norwegian Textile Guildmembers were touring living museums in northern Norway in July 1999, the docents were impressed at our knowledge of the patterns and techniques of the early rugs and coverlets. At art museums I think they were pleased at how interested we were in procedures and final results.

Donna can be reached at 116 E. Glendale Dr., Boone, N.C. 28607; donnad@boone.net

Future Tours to Morocco Planned

I sell Moroccan rugs on the Internet at www.marrakeshexpress.org and am working to set up a new "room" where people can meet some of the weavers and buy directly from them. I am an anthropologist and have worked and lived in Morocco off and on over the last 35 years, and recently have begun leading tours to Morocco for college alumni groups and occasionally the Smithsonian. In 2000 I led a tour that I developed and called a "Woman's Tour to Morocco." While men were welcome, the focus was [in addition to the usual tourist sights] to visit and speak with [some spoke English, or I translated] Moroccan women from all walks of life. They included an author, an activist, an artist, weavers and wholesalers, and women running a honey cooperative. That trip is described on my web site at <http://www.uslink.net/ddavis/travel/travel.htm>. While I do not have a tour scheduled for next spring, I am collecting the names of interested people, and will contact them when I do set one up. Best regards, Susan Schaefer Davis, 4 College Lane, Haverford, PA 19041; 610/649-7717; Sdavis@uslink.net.

Thanks...

To Linda Ligon, publisher of *Handwoven Magazine*, for highlighting WARP as a "network and clearinghouse for those working with craftspeople...and as filled with interesting intersections and patterns as the most intricate weaving."

To Susan Lilly of The Weaving Room in Portland, Oregon, for donating a copy of her book *Clothing Patterns from the Weaving Room* to the WARP library. The Weaving Room's web site is www.weavingroom.com.

WARP Informational

Fliers Available

If you would like copies of the WARP informational fliers to distribute to your guild or at local conferences, please contact the WARP office:
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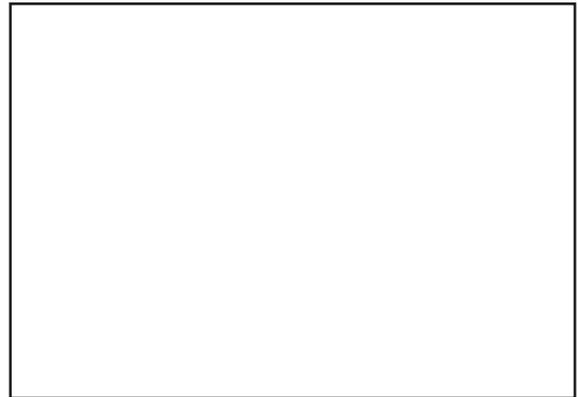
Letters....

Armenian Craft Council Has First Meeting

Dear Friends,

Yesterday (November 10) the Board of the Armenian Craft Council met for the first time to begin an organization that will bring together the many different sectors in Armenia that deal with crafts. An influential group of people were invited to participate in this venture, but talking with people individually and dealing with them as a group is a different dynamic. We started to act like people with common interests after I presented a couple of possible mission statements. When I said that my words were in English, but the statement needed to mean something in Armenian — they erupted into passionate discussion and the organization became theirs. It seems there is no direct equivalent to “craft” in Armenian, so they decided to invent one. The meeting was not orderly and often translation into English got lost in the heat of pressing statements. But the issues were how to get this organization to work. We finally toasted the beginning of the Armenian Craft Council by all eating Bourbon chocolate together.

Of course, a lot of hard work is ahead. The International Executive Service Corps has offered interim support to get started legally. The first activity of the new ACC is the book project that brought me to Armenia, but many more are being considered. The “Crafts Tour of Armenia” will profile craftspeople throughout Armenia and will be used in tourism promotion. Philis Alvic, 2815 Phoenix Road, Lexington, KY 40503; 859/276-0356; philisalvic@prodigy.net.



Barbara Bergman and Friends in Peru

Weaving with Shipibo Indians in Peru

I have contacts with Shipibo Indians near Pulculpa, Peru. Recently I started a simple weaving project for girls to learn from their grandmothers to weave a simple, sellable object. I pay the girls \$.60 for each bracelet they make, which is a lot in their economy. Then I sell the bracelets for \$1.00 at a Native Center here in the U.S. that does Rain Forest programs for children. The profit goes to a fund that will enable weavers to mail the bracelets to the U.S. So far, the project is small--one village, 10 girls, 100 bracelets. I can envision it increasing to ten times that number. I need help and want to include some other groups and individuals who work with the Shipibo Indians of the Ucayali River in the Upper Amazon Rain Forest in Peru. I am hoping that my [WARP] membership will help me gain confidence and acquaintance with others who do similar things. Sincerely, Barbara Bergman, Rt. 1, Box 73, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.

More Letters....

Tanzanian Weaving Project Seeks Partners

The San Diego Creative Weavers Guild recently received this letter, forwarded to WARP by Janis Saunders:

“Dear Friends,

The Ifakara Women Weavers Association (IWWA), is an organization in search of partnerships all around the world, with other parties of shared goal and vision.

We would really like to know the areas of partnership, such as exhibition of products, culture exchange, training or sharing skills and marketing opportunities, etc.

With this little introduction, I expect some feedback soon. For a reply you may fax us at 255-23-2625055.” Guido Msita, The Manager, IWWA, PO Box 505, Ifakara/Morogoro, Tanzania; phone 023 625 205

The accompanying brochure describes IWWA as an NGO established in 1993 in Tanzania, with 46 weavers working in 14 workshops. The weavers produce many different kinds of textiles in various designs and colors, all made from cotton yarn dyed in-house. The textiles include blankets/bedspreads, sarongs/vikoi and textiles for use as bed linens, curtains, cushion and pillow cases, seat covers for chairs and couches, and dish towels.

Sri Mayapur Vikas Sangha

We came to know about WARP from John Sims of Boulder.

We have commenced implementation of a project on skill upgradation, improved production and marketing with about 300 handloom weavers in our area of operation. The project will also provide a common facility centre for the weavers of the area. The weavers are going to produce exclusive cotton/silk fabrics of high quality with natural dyes which we intend to export. We will need a lot of technological support and expertise for this project. We hope the WARP network will be able to help in accessing the same.

We will benefit immensely if you kindly carry the information of this initiative of ours in your newsletter. Sincerely, Pancharatna Das, Director, Sri Mayapur Vikas Sangha; e-mails: smvs@vsnl.com, pancharatna.acbsp@pamho.net; <http://www.indev.nic.in/smvs>.

Vessels Fiber Arts Education Program

I am a fiber artist in Santa Barbara, California, and six years ago I conceived of and developed a fiber arts program for the local schools called Vessels Fiber Arts Education program. In addition to providing resources for classroom teachers and teaching classes for students and teachers, Vessels has sponsored a community service project each year. Most of our community projects have focused on supporting local non-profits such as the Alzheimer's Association, the Therapeutic Riding Academy, etc. Recently, we have expanded our awareness and support to people raising logwood trees in the Dominican Republic and selling the natural dyestuff.

I have been teaching fiber arts in the schools for eight years and am now in the process of writing curriculum that includes knitting, weaving, felting, spinning, embroidery, basketmaking, papermaking, and more. Also each year, Vessels sponsors a children's fiber arts exhibit at the local art museum. I look forward to connecting with other fiber artists working with children. Sincerely, Brescia Kralovic-Logan, 1041 Via Chaparral, Santa Barbara, CA 93105; 805/692-8987; vessels@west.net.

Weave A Real Peace

Membership Information

Annual Dues

\$7 (simple living)

\$15 (regular)

\$25 (group/supporting)

\$100+ (patron/donor)

All memberships are based on the calendar year, expiring December 31. Each member receives all publications for the year joined.

Members receive an annual Membership Directory with information on members' interests and activities, and a quarterly newsletter.

Dues and donations are tax deductible and are used for printing, mailing, and office expenses.

For membership or additional information, please send your name, address, and telephone number with appropriate check or money order in U.S. funds payable to **WARP** to:

Weave A Real Peace
3102 Classen Boulevard
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Afghan Update: Lessons Learned

by Jennie Wood

I remember saying to someone at this year's WARP meeting in New Hampshire that the only bright spot on the horizon for the Afghan refugees was that things were so bad that they just couldn't get any worse, and that, in fact, through the efforts of some terrific NGOs and the UNHCR, things might even improve. I'm admitting in print to this incredibly naive statement now to remind all of us who work at the international grass roots level, especially myself, that no matter how deeply we become involved as individuals in the lives of a community, and regardless of the positive things we may see happening around us, we have mighty little control over the circumstances under which we work. I suppose it's good to be reminded of that fact from time to time, but this has been a very costly way to learn that lesson. Couldn't someone have just sent us a memo?

About a year and a half ago, a friend, Rachel Lehr, and I decided to develop a project to benefit Afghan refugee women living in Pakistan. In the backs of our minds we figured that in a year or two after getting this project established, we'd be able to get into Afghanistan and spread our resources to the women there. After all, the Taliban couldn't keep this nonsense up forever, could it? The focus of our efforts has been traditional Central Asian handwork – primarily embroidery, sewing, and knitting – using the skills, designs, and aesthetics of the Afghan women, supplemented with high quality materials. Following in the path of the successful rug projects I've worked with, we were returning to handspun yarns, natural dyes, and all natural fiber fabrics. With a small start-up grant from Barakat, we started **Rubia**, now officially with non-profit status.

The events of the last two months have had a significant impact on our plans for **Rubia**, and, I must say, on both Rachel and me. I'm writing about this to share a few lessons that we feel we've gained from recent experiences. First, for two solid months we've been angry and terribly frustrated, but we've used that emotional energy to do two things: we've rethought our priorities and decided to go ahead without handspun yarns because of the time it will take to get that going, and we've campaigned to raise more money to pay for the purchase of these materials. Also, we've gone to knitting and weaving guilds and shops to ask for donations of yarns and needles that are appropriate for our work. In other words, the sense of urgency that world affairs have provided has forced us to be more practical – to stop designing and start doing.

The most crucial lesson I've been reminded of, though, is the importance of teaching. Sharing skills, especially literacy, is a way of providing tools with which people can make their own way without relying on us for help. It has been observed over and over, in all parts of the world, that education, especially of girls, is one of the most effective ways to encourage economic development and social change.

How can we apply this principle to **Rubia**? 1) Take the time and make the effort to share all the information I have, all my skills and any skills I can recruit from others. 2) Explain why we need to do things a particular way instead of just insisting on it. 3) Include literacy skills in every step of the project. Have women learn to write their name so they can sign their work, and build from there. 4) Develop workshop leaders or masters who will have the responsibility to teach others and to recruit more women into the project.

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Book Review...

The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth, by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

501 pp.; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, \$35.

Excerpts from a review by John Demos which appeared in the New York Times Book Review, November 11, 2001.

"The American pastoral, with its central signifier of clothmaking, is the subject of a remarkable new book by the Harvard historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. Ulrich is a supremely gifted scholar and writer. And with *The Age of Homespun* she has truly outdone herself. Venturing off in a new and highly original direction, she has put physical objects--mainly but not entirely textiles--at the center of her inquiry. The result is, among other things, an exemplary response to a longstanding historians' challenge--to treat objects, no less than writings, as documents that speak to us from and about the past.

"*The Age of Homespun* is loosely but effectively organized around 14 specific objects, including two baskets, two spinning wheels, a yarn winder, a rug, a tablecloth and "an unfinished stocking." If this list sounds unprepossessing on its face, the point is all that Ulrich makes of it through a deeply creative process of analysis and contextualizing. In fact, her objects become meaningful only when they are joined to the experience of the people who produced, owned, used, and preserved them. It is, finally, the connections that make her investigation so unusual and rewarding."

Afghan Update

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We have received important technical help as well as support and inspiration from Ann Adams, another WARP member, whom I first met at the annual meeting in May. We're hoping that she can come with us to Pakistan soon to train our knitters.

The best way I can tell you what we know of the current situation among the refugees in Pakistan is to quote a message that Rachel received on October 1st from one of our contacts there. Habibullah is in the carpet business and has offered us the use of one of his dyehouses. He wrote:

"Thank you for remembering us. We are all fine and safe here till now but I don't know what is happening tomorrow? It seems something will be happening soon. Hope to be solved without fighting. Business is not good. We have many jobless carpet weavers right now because of mounting crisis. Nobody distributes wool (yarn) to the weavers. Our Turkmen weavers had a good life here from carpet weaving. We had no beggars, but now everyone come and asks help for food. Last Friday I was in Attock and went to Juma Namaz to the Mosque. There was a woman with the two kids; she was from Uzbek family asking for help. I know she must be carpet weaver but nobody give wool right now to make carpet, so what can she do? There is no job for them. If situation is continue then these people will be in hard time. Still everyday many weavers looking for wool. It is a bad situation here now."

If you are interested in learning about and keeping up with events in Afghanistan/Pakistan and Central Asia as a whole, see www.eurasianet.org. They have good maps. For more detailed information and for ways to help, see www.afghanwomensmission.org, www.rawa.org, www.dacaar.org. Rubia's website is being rebuilt, but you may email me at wood_jennie@hotmail.com.

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What Can We Do?

by Deborah Chandler

As I write this, we are at war. I'd love to think up a euphemism for it, but it's a little late for that. We are at war, and at this moment it appears that "we" incorporates (or will soon) most of the world. Once again violence begets violence, no matter who is right or wrong. My own belief is that both sides are both, right and wrong. Until they (or we) start listening to each other, and maybe even if/after they (we) do, that will continue to be true. One of the problems is that we all think there is a right and a wrong—A right, A wrong. Clearly distinguishable. Wouldn't life be simple if it were that easy?

So what CAN we do? Is there such a thing as weaving a real peace? Or is that just a cute phrase we thought up nine years ago that means nothing when put to the test? We are, after all, a really tiny group of people, only a few in any one place. How many of us really believe that a few people can truly make a difference, let alone one? Especially if that one is "me," who is more part of the mainstream than the jetstream?

I have a WARP bookmark on my wall, with the mission and goals right there where I can read them whenever I need to be reminded. And right now, I need to be reminded. I need to believe that what we are doing is important, that what I am doing is important, and that this world of textiles is important even in times of crisis. Having just reread the goals, I can say with complete confidence that what Weave A Real Peace is about IS important. Absolutely, clearly, and with staggering potential.

Our mission statement: Empowering women and communities in need through textile arts.

Goals: (this is just half of them)

To provide cross-cultural education and support within the textile community.

To provide guidance in the realities of appropriate assistance.

To enrich the lives of individuals in the global textile community through cross-cultural exchange.

The words I see here in mental bold print are cross-cultural education, support, textile community, appropriate assistance, lives, global, and cross cultural exchange. Let me expand on those.

Cross-cultural Education/Exchange Many of the essays I've seen since September 11 have been about "why they hate us so much," and where an anger so extreme has its roots. If we want to SOLVE conflicts rather than simply perpetuate them we need to work to understand both/all sides. The apt metaphors are endless: do we simply cut cancer out, or do we also do research to learn where it comes from, and thus prevent it? We all know, at various levels, if we want to SOLVE a problem, we need to know what caused it. Whether it is a hysterical two year old, a broken warp thread, a burned dinner, a missed deadline, a car that won't start, or a bunch of people willing to die in order to stop us (from what?), we need to understand what happened if we want a change. Cross-cultural education, exchange, even just exposure, all are steps leading to a better understanding, and thus a possibility for change.

Textile community. That is our ticket in the door. How many of us have read about the treatment of women under the Taliban? It's pretty appalling. Of all their freedoms that have been eliminated, textile work is not on the list. I don't know how many of us would be willing to don the burka and go in to weave with them, or even if we could. But imagine the morale boost that could be provided via that small avenue.

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Studying Batik in Bali

Continued from page 1

tions for the anniversary celebration for their family temple. It is interesting to be in a culture which spends about one-quarter of each family's time and resources on their religious life.

I also loved being in a culture which places a premium on beauty in terms of colorful clothing, ceremonies and flower decorations everywhere. One restaurant regularly decorated their stairs with frangipani blossoms and all the statues on the grounds had flowers in them as well as beautiful arrangements in the bathrooms!

Around Ubud, it is possible to visit weaving factories (3300 threads per meter width!) and cottage industries where the cotton or silk sarongs are handpainted. I kept looking for a big machine which was printing the fabric, but never found it in Bali, perhaps in Java.

There is a new gallery in Ubud called Thread of Life, devoted to preserving and encouraging traditional weaving and textiles. They offer textile appreciation courses and have beautiful items in their gallery including ikat, batik, and songhet. Their website is www.threadsoflife.com.

I would be happy to communicate with anyone interested in going to Bali or those who have studied there before me. Amanda Cater gugguru@mcn.net

What Can We Do?

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Appropriate Assistance. Hoo boy, is that a huge can of worms. When we wrote it, we were thinking about sending packages to countries where the taxes just for receiving something are so high that the "gift" is unacceptable, literally, because the recipients can't pay the fee. Or knowing how to send something so that it actually arrives; living in many other countries can make one worship the US Post Office. But this also includes the much larger idea of What is a gift? What "help" is wanted, and what "help" is resented? We've all known parent-offspring relationships where the parent wanted to give something their "child" did not want to receive. It works that way with countries, too, but the conflicts are bigger. Getting to know and understand another culture can go a long way toward understanding what is appropriate.

Support, lives, global. I don't think I need to define those. They do just fine on their own.

Cross-Cultural opportunities within WARP. The idea about weaving with women under Taliban rule is pretty extreme, to be sure. But in how many other countries and cultures has the US created "unrest"? (More than most of us are aware of.) How many groups of people are discriminated against within US borders because of cultural differences? It seems to me that 1) getting to know ANY group better is immediately beneficial, and 2) once we "get it"—that Group A is really different than we are, then we will begin to understand that all the others are different too, in ways unlike us or Group A. Once the shell of limited thinking is cracked, the new understanding can fully hatch, unfold, and begin to grow. And is that ever exciting!

There are quite a few WARP members who lead people into other-world experiences. You will see their stories throughout this newsletter. We want to be sure that all WARP members know about as many opportunities as possible, so if you are one who hosts trips, please let us know. The rest of you, we encourage you to pack your bags and travel—and remember you don't have to leave the country, or even your community. Step out of the mainstream even for just a small adventure. One person CAN make a difference, it happens all the time. Let's learn enough for it to be a positive difference!

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead (ONE person who has made a difference: Helen Keller, Mahatma Ghandi, Adolf Hitler, Martin Luther King Jr., Joan of Arc, Charlie Parker, Andres Segovia, Pablo Picasso, Vincent Van Gogh, Georgia O'Keefe, Mary Meigs Atwater, Linda Ligon, EEGilmore, you.)

Colour Congress 2002: Art, History, and the Use of Natural Dyes

submitted by Debbie Durham

The 2002 Colour Congress, an international and interdisciplinary symposium on natural dyeing, will be held May 19-21, at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. The focus of the Congress will be on the historical and archaeological aspects (past) of natural dyeing, present practices and current research (contemporary craft/artisanal praxis), and new directions, markets, international opportunities (future). Vendors of natural dyes, books and journals related to natural dyeing, dyestuffs, finished goods and materials that have been naturally dyed, and raw materials and supplies for natural dyeing are encouraged to participate.

The event will include pre- and post-workshops, botanical tours, invited papers, refereed presentations and posters, special topic sessions, a juried exhibit at Brunner Art Museum (contemporary art featuring natural dyes), a juried exhibit at Farmhouse Museum (historical/reproduction textile pieces) and vendors and book sellers. Two hundred to 400 participants are expected to attend.

For more information about becoming a vendor at this event, or to learn more about the Congress, access the web site at www.fsc.iastate.edu/tc/news/colourcongress, or contact Sara J. Kadolph, Iowa State University, 1052 LeBaron, Ames, IA 50011 USA (515-294-3012), skadolph@iastate.edu

Multi-organization Textile Art Facility to Open in Minnesota's Twin Cities

submitted by Karen Searle

The Textile Center of Minnesota is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to promoting excellence in fiber arts and preserving textile traditions of the many cultural groups residing in Minnesota. The organization recently purchased a building to serve as a multi-use facility for the Center's activities, plus the activities of 25 metropolitan-area textile guilds and associations. The building is being renovated in preparation for the Grand Opening February 9, 2002.

The Minnesota Textile Center's new urban setting provides textile artists with practical support and education as well as a place to meet and learn from other artists and display their work. The Textile Center also sponsors a guest artist program, produces special public events to promote textile arts and artists to the public, provides many educational and exhibition opportunities for artists, and facilitates community outreach programs to preserve cultural textile traditions. For more information about this unique facility, contact Karen Searle, ksearle@visi.com.

Updated WARP Show

Now Available!

Thanks to Marcia Bellas and those who contributed slides, WARP has a newly updated slide show. If your guild, textile class, social club, and church group hasn't seen the program, or if you want to see it again, check out the WARP website <http://www.weavershand.com/warp.html> for a preview. Click on Traveling Slide Show.

Use of the program is free of charge, fulfilling WARP's mission "to provide cross-cultural education and support within the textile community". We only ask that users pay shipping charges.

If you would like to borrow the current slide program, contact:

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This is the photo that should have been on Page 13 of the Fall 2001 WARP newsletter.



Wendy Weiss and Aminjonova Saltanathon in Tajikistan, with one of Aminjonova's ikat textiles.

Another Sale; Another \$500 for WARP!

by Marcia Bellas

I recently presented the WARP slide show to the Cincinnati Weaver's Guild, and at the same meeting sold fairly-traded Guatemalan handcrafts as a fund-raiser for WARP. The two activities complemented each other wonderfully, especially since the slide show now contains slides of women from UPAVIM and Mayan Hands, the producers of the products offered for sale. Enthusiastic guild members delighted in the colorful, well-made crafts, and the products sold themselves! The event was enjoyed by all, and it was profitable both for the Guatemalan artisans and for WARP, which will receive \$500 from the sale. I encourage all of you to give it a try! As I reported in the last newsletter, I have not had good luck in obtaining grants from foundations. Although I will continue to pursue this fund-raising strategy, it is clear that we must work to raise money in alternative ways. If every WARP member held a sale, we would likely raise the \$100,000 endowment we need and could stop fund-raising!

Guatemalan Textile Tour to Benefit WARP

For the third year, Deborah Chandler will be hosting groups of North American weavers visiting Guatemalan weavers. A special offering in 2002 is a June trip that will be a fundraiser for WARP. Open only to WARP members (and their families), all payments will be made to WARP, and therefore be tax deductible. WARP will cover the cash expenses of the trip, and all other money will go directly into the Endowment Fund. So both you and WARP come out ahead.

Some or all of the following will be included in the tours: visiting Museo Ixchel and Casa de Tejidos Antiguos, two very different indigenous textile museums, trips to the more-than-you-can-see textile markets in Chichicastenango and Salcaja, some time around the gorgeous volcanic Lake Atitlan, two days weaving on both backstrap and floor looms in the home of life-long weavers Daniel and Rosario Garcia, visits to at least three women's weaving cooperatives producing work for Mayan Hands (founded and distributed by WARP members Brenda Rosenbaum and Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland), hear about Concern America, a development and refugee aid organization directed by WARP member Maria Carlo, relaxing in hot springs high up in a cloud forest, exploring some small but important Mayan ruins, and more.

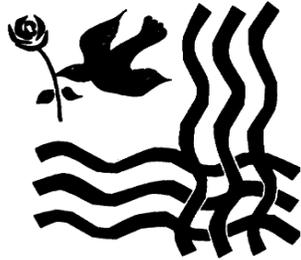
Tour dates are March 6-16, 2002; April 10-20, 2002; and June 19-29, 2002 (WARP trip), and each trip has a slightly different itinerary. While most of the travel is into the more famous Western Highlands, the April trip will be travelling east as well—a very different terrain and culture, which will include a trip to the Biotopo, a National Park that is high jungle home to the quetzal, the national bird. Groups are limited to five, and more than half the time guests sleep and eat in Deborah's home instead of hotels. The cost listed below covers ALL expenses except airfare (usually under \$500), Guatemalan exit tax (\$30), and personal shopping.

The cost for eleven days (including flying days) is \$1050. This covers all room, board, internal travel, tickets, etc. It does NOT cover plane fare to Guatemala, exit tax, or personal shopping.

For complete information, write or email Deborah Chandler, Weaving Futures, PO Box 591828/M131, Miami, FL 33159, or DeborahWF@aol.com.

Host a Sale for WARP

UPAVIM Crafts and Mayan Hands make it easy to hold a sales event at your local church, office, home, or guild meeting. These two groups have generously offered to consign pre-priced fairly traded handcrafts from Guatemala to WARP members who wish to host a sale to benefit WARP. You get a box of handcrafted items, sell what you can, and return what is left with the income from the sale. All the profits, above wholesale cost (and minus shipping), will go to WARP. Help WARP, Guatemalan artisans, and your local community by having a consignment sale. Contact Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland (upavimc@clark.net or 301/515-5911) for more details.



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Special Issue: Why Travel?

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