

Hello,

Jill Hunter here to share my Weaving Journey and Studio Tour with you. I live in Rye, NH which is on the Seacoast and a long way from Vermont. So why am I a member of VWG? Well I have always been impressed and intrigued by the Vermont guild because of the few friendly members I've met over the years at NH Weavers Guild and NEWS meetings and I've been impressed by the woven items on display on the guild table and in the shows at NEWS (New England Weavers Seminar).

I initially joined the Vermont guild a few years back to take a multi-day workshop with Elizabeth Hill on double weave. This was a wonderful experience. The class was held in October and I stayed in a nearby inn, "The Three Stallion" I think it was called. The drive up was spectacular with autumn foliage, the workshop fun, and Vermont guild members friendly, helpful and welcoming. I especially liked the building where the VWG holds its meetings.

It has been difficult to attend meetings because of the distance and long drive but during this pandemic time I have been thrilled to be able to attend the Zoom workshops and business meetings. Vermont Weavers guild is small but mighty!

Some other guilds that I have the pleasure of being a member of include the NH Weavers Guild, Weavers East (a local seacoast NH study group), and NOBO which is a north of Boston Guild that meets in Newbury, MA.

I started weaving on a small metal potholder loom as a kiddo and that was it! I had found a true love of my life! Later on at the University of NH (1977-1981) where I studied Plant Science and Entomology I took two semesters of Weaving and one semester of Metal Smithing from Winifred Shaw. Mrs. Shaw was head of the Art Department at UNH and also a president of the NHWG. She was a great teacher and weaver and solidified in me my love of weaving. However it was not a clear path to a career that would support me. At that time of my life I was focused on getting a job and unfortunately for me weaving was not the path. So sadly I put weaving aside but promised myself, "When I grow up I will own a house with room enough for a floor loom and I will have enough money to buy yarn and enough time to weave". Weaving to me was a luxury item!

So after a career of working with insects at UNH and then in Mosquito Control I went back to school and worked as a Dental Hygienist for 20 years. I retired and found my way back to weaving and finally felt grown up enough to focus on the luxury of weaving on a floor loom! I now proudly own a few looms: Baby Wolf, 8 Shaft Macomber and two Dorsets. Rigid heddle and table looms have lived in my house but they have moved along as I find the floor loom works best for me. I do enjoy using my whole body in the weaving process.

The tactile connection to fiber is important to me and I love playing with color. When I sit down to work on a weaving project I don't want to be designing it on a computer. I still do it with graph paper the old fashion way. My favorite fibers are wool, linen, cotton and silk. I find my yarns mostly on the yarn table at guild meetings. I guess I feel sad for that last bit of unused fiber and want to give it a "home". I love using up the last of a cone and mixing up lots of colors in a front to back designed fabric. Weaving workshops and classes are a passion and I would like to always have one booked if I could only afford the time and money.

At one point a few years back I was a Weaving Artist in Residency for 4-8 weeks. This was five years in a row at an elementary school in Kingston, NH. The class started out with handheld student created cardboard looms and progressed to floor looms when I brought in my two beloved Dorset looms for the 57 students to weave on. The 4th grade students each wove plain and twill and it was wonderful to see them experience that "aha" moment when they got the "throw the shuttle, beat, switch your feet" rhythm of creating fabric by hand. The fabric they made would become a community installation usually based on a Dragon, which was the schools' mascot.

When I'm not weaving I am gardening, beekeeping, X-country skiing, biking or travelling with my husband in our Airstream. I am looking forward to attending in person meetings in Vermont with you all when we can safely meet again!

Thank you for this opportunity to share my weaving story with you.

Best,
Jill Hunter



