



March Newsletter Contents

Topic	Page
View from the Chair	1
Membership Secretaries' Report	1-2
Wanted: UK Membership Secretary / Social Media	2
Braid and Banter 2024	2
On-line Workshops 2024	2
Wonderwool Wales	3
30 th Anniversary Exhibition	3
Yarndale 2024	4
Noémi Speiser	4
Travelling Show 2024	4
Swaps 2024	4
Weavers on the Wild Side	4-5
2024 AGM Speaker	5-6
HGA Textiles and Tea	6
Heritage Crafts	6-7
Braids 2025 - Update	7
Braids 2025 – Tutor Travel Grants	7
Bursaries	7
A Braid to Make	8
Dates for your Diary	10

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Find us on Facebook

We welcome submissions for the Newsletter and the deadline for the next issue is 1st September 2024.

View from the Chair

Welcome to the June Newsletter.

Recently I have spent an enjoyable time delving into the creative worlds of the tutors for Braids 2025 by clicking the website links on the instructors page <https://amksoc.org/news/braids-2025-tutors/> and/or entering their names into a search engine. I have explored amazing structures and designs of braids and bands plus other varied craft techniques. One craft new to me was that of decorative gourds, some of which were embellished by braid.

One of the pleasures of The Braid Society is communicating with people across the world.....Australia, Switzerland, UK and US have been at the forefront this quarter as you will see from some of the articles below.

Thank you to Elliot Evans for a "make". He is a tutor at Braids 2025. To find out more about Elliot's class and those of the other wonderful tutors please go to <https://amksoc.org/news/braids-2025-tutors/>

Happy braiding,



Susan Read

Membership Secretaries' Report

The Braid Society total membership as of May 31st, 2024, now stands at 496 members. 289 full, 181 long-haul, 14 group and family, and 12 honorary memberships. Since the 24th of February 2024, we have added 26 new members. 2 of our new members have asked that their information is not shared.

Eighteen of our new members are from the USA, five from the UK and three from Australia. Of the new members 13 joined as full members and 13 joined with long-haul memberships.

A very warm welcome is extended to each new member.

Adrienne Borders	USA
Sarah Northshield	USA
Phyllis Hirsch	USA
James Pochert	USA
Patricia Colson-Montgomery	USA
Michele Oreilly	USA
Jill Smith	Australia
Libby Nottle	Australia
Cynthia Landers	USA
Karla Jennings	USA
Susan Andersen	USA
Caroline Green	USA
Phillip Ellis	USA
Simon Dunkley	UK
Martyn Canavan	UK
Tracy Shapiro	USA
Helen Mitchell	UK
Kimberly Davis	USA
Jeffrey Alford	USA
Kim Baller	USA
Elizabeth Brookman	USA
Cheryl Sutherland	USA
Rebecca Hebert	USA
Lyn Russell	UK

- When UK members renew their membership with a cheque, I bank it into our account and update our database. Most members renew on-line.
 - There are 4 committee meetings per year to attend via zoom.
 - I communicate with my other half, Sandy Allison, our US-based membership secretary who takes care of the database.
 - In October I collate members' addresses for the new Strands and send them to the Printers. That is it, so it is not a heavy workload on top of your day-to-day business. I will be there to help in the transition period.
- Marie Henderson

Social Media - Can you help?

Diane Watanabe very kindly manages the Braids and Bands Facebook page and Debbie Richardson posts some items on our social media. We would love to have more helpers to post more frequently on Braids and Bands. If you would like to help, please contact Debbie Richardson on admin@braidsociety.com

Debbie Richardson

Braid and Banter

Braid and Banter will continue to alternate between the 1st and 2nd Saturdays of each month, so the next few sessions will be:

- June 8th (2nd Saturday) 10am - 12pm EST
 - July 6th (1st Saturday) 10am - 12pm EST
 - August 10th (2nd Saturday) 10am - 12pm EST
 - September 7th (1st Saturday) 10am - 12pm EST
- All the Zoom sessions use the link below, which is posted on the Society's website and also on groups.io/BraidsandBands.

Braid and Banter Zoom link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81260539046?pwd=Wm dXT1lZejh6VC9TeHNoOSsvZE5lZz09>

Meeting ID: 812 6053 9046

Passcode: 589271

Robyn Jackson

Online Workshops

We are looking for tutors and workshops for the 2024 – 25 winter season. If you are interested or have any suggestions on tutors and/or techniques that you would like us to offer, please contact me (events@braidsociety.com).

Kay Hawkins

If you change your email or street address, please let us know. We would like for each member to continue receiving newsletters, updates and Strands.

Email the membership secretary (membership@braidsociety.com) and let them know your new email address so they can make the necessary change for you.

All items that are **mailed/posted** go through **Marie Henderson**. If posting your membership form and cheque, please send to:

Marie Henderson
3 Redcoll Cottages Longniddry
East Lothian
EH32 0PL Scotland
United Kingdom

Sandy Allison and Marie Henderson

Wanted: a UK-based part of the Membership Secretary

I am stepping down at the next AGM in October 2024. My role is as one of the two current membership secretaries. I am based in the UK and my roles are;

- When new members join during the year I send them a copy of Strands (current members have their copy of Strands sent directly from the publishers)

Wonderwool Wales 2024

The Braid Society had a stand at Wonderwool Wales at the Royal Welsh Showground in Builth Wells, Wales this year. This is the third year we have taken the Braid Society Travelling Show and stand to this two-day event and each year the event seems to get bigger and better.



The team and stand at Wonderwool Wales

We had a stand at the corner of two aisles in the middle hall which worked well as visitors found us much earlier in the day than at previous events. We had lots of visitors to the stand, both seasoned braiders and people who had not come across braids and narrow bands before and were fascinated by both the Travelling Show and the various techniques that were being demonstrated by our volunteers.

Thank you to Rosie, Meg, Susan, Gloria and Julie who spent time on the stand talking with the public, selling lots of kits and books and demonstrating despite the freezing temperatures. Thermals and fingerless gloves have been added to the list for next year!



Some of the Travelling Show exhibits

Pictures of all this year's Travelling Show exhibits will be in Strands 2024 later in the year.

We were also publicising our Exhibition and Try Braiding Day at the Newtown Textile Museum (see below).

Kay Hawkins

30th Anniversary Exhibition

The 30th Anniversary Exhibition was exhibited in the Newtown Textile Museum from 23 April – 11 May 2024. We had selected these dates to coincide with the Wonderwool Wales weekend as Newtown and Builth Wells are only about half an hour apart and we were hopeful that some of the many people who come to Wonderwool from around the country might include a visit to the museum before or after the weekend.

The museum is closed over winter and opened early to accommodate us and our plan worked well. The museum was delighted with the higher than normal visitor numbers during the 3 weeks of the exhibition and we met several visitors on the Friday and Monday either side of the Wonderwool Weekend who were delighted to be able to visit the museum and our exhibition in conjunction with Wonderwool.

As well as demonstrating on 3 days during the exhibition, Julie and I also ran a Try Braiding Day which was well attended including by some who had signed up at the Museum's stand during the Wonderwool weekend.

The 30th Anniversary Exhibition is moving to the Borders Textile Towerhouse in Hawick, Scotland next and will be open to the public from 22 June – 13 July 2024. Several Society members will be demonstrating various braiding techniques on at least 8 days during the exhibition, and we are looking forward to meeting the public in Scotland.

Kay Hawkins

Yarndale 2024

The Braid Society will have a stand at Yarndale, Skipton, UK at the end of September, 28th and 29th, for the two day show. The show is held in Skipton Auction Mart and all the stands are in the pens normally used for animals. The travelling show will be on display. If you would like to help on the stand on either day, please contact me Debbie Richardson at admin@braidsociety.com

Debbie Richardson

Noémi Speiser



Noémi Speiser (97) is the absolute luminary and "Grande Dame" of textile techniques invented and developed since time immemorial. She is one of the contemporary witnesses and scientists who have tirelessly dedicated her life to researching the textile creation process, materials, hands, knowledge and creativity.

She was not afraid to use unconventional means, such as dismantling existing braids, to understand the essence of the technique. This allowed her to break through with "track plans," as used in industrial braiding, to explain the intricate path of each thread in each braid or plait. In her own way, we can call her the discoverer and unveiler of certain textile techniques that few, or in some cases no one, knew about in the 1960s/70s when she set out on her own to discover the hidden secrets of plaited braids.

Noémi's work was honoured for the first time in a comprehensive exhibition with photographs, documents, analyses, drawings, and original research objects that can also be understood as works of art at an exhibition at the Praxis Gallery, Basel, Switzerland which opened on 16 March 2024. On the occasion of this exhibition, the book of her life's work "An Annotated Classification of Textile Techniques", which has just been published by Haupt Verlag, was presented to the public.

Cyril Kazis (Gallery owner) and Thessy Schoenholzer Nichols

(a member of the curatorial team): The Praxis Gallery.

The Braid Society will be stocking copies of Noémi Speiser's book "An Annotated Classification of Textile Techniques". Please keep an eye on the Books section of the website

Travelling Show 2024

Thank you for all the entries. These were varied and inventive on the theme of Bricks and Tiles. The Travelling Show was exhibited at Wonderwool and elicited interest in the techniques and admiration for the skill of the makers.

Averil Otiv

Swap 2024 - A Luggage Identifier

Now we're heading into summer (hopefully) and the holiday season it's a good time to be thinking of this year's practical sample exchange -

A Luggage Identifier -

which is open to all full members of the Society. All you need to do is make six 15-20 cms samples of your chosen braid/band, mount each on A4* card or stiff paper with details of your name, email address, yarns used, braiding method and anything else you think might be interesting to the recipients. Pop these onto plastic sleeves and send them, with a self addressed envelope/label to me at:

71 Charlton Lane,
Cheltenham
GL53 9DY, U.K.
by 30th September

The Society keeps one copy of each set (previous ones can be seen on our website) and you will receive five different samples in exchange.

*For overseas members A4 is approx.21x29 cms and its best to mark your package Hobby Braid Exchange.

Bridget Paish

Weavers on the Wild Side

WOWS group

Two sheep and Band weaving in Australia.

My path to coordinating an interest group about ancient textile techniques began with a bag of fleece.

Two sweet little orphaned lambs were given to me while I was living on a farm in rural Australia. Of course, they quickly grew into sheep and after shearing I had some beautiful fleece to deal with. I contacted the local Spinners and Weavers Guild and entered the

wonderful world of spinning and weaving. Some would call it a slippery slope!

After learning basic spinning, I became interested in weaving. My daughter needed a guitar strap, so I started researching band weaving techniques and realised that there were lots of fascinating ways to make a strap.

After a move to Melbourne, I joined the Handweavers and Spinners Guild of Victoria [HWSGV]. Laverne Waddington taught an inspiring backstrap pebble weave class at the Guild which I was fortunate to attend. With her guidance I was able to adapt the back strap techniques to the inkle loom. Several members of that class set up a Band weaving group and I have coordinated that group since 2018.



As the coordinator I soon realised that there were many fascinating techniques that predated standard multi-shaft weaving. I renamed the group 'Weavers on the Wild Side' as most weavers in the Guild thought our techniques were very strange.

I became very excited about learning as much as possible about all these techniques. The list grew quickly over the years including, tablet weave [a complex area in itself], inkle weave [Baltic, pebble weave, double weave, krobragd, intermesh, Estonian weave], kumihimo, sprang, ply split braiding, taaniko, chilkat weave, Ravenstail weave, Mad weave, twined warp weave, Nalbinding, Fingerweaving, Lucet, Knotting plus finishing techniques and colour theory. [This link shows one of our exhibitions.](#)

We have a lot of fun learning these techniques and have a deep admiration for those who developed these surprisingly complex techniques using very simple equipment.

My aim with our group is to keep these techniques alive by ongoing learning and teaching. As a group we are keen to be an Australian base for those interested in these techniques. Our link up with the UK Braid Society is very welcome. We meet monthly [3rd Sunday 10 am to 1 pm] at the Guild rooms in Melbourne and on Zoom. Please join us

on zoom from wherever you are! Contact me for details at groupwows@gmail.com

Ruth Mitchell

The Braid Society is very pleased that Ruth Mitchell is to be our Australia representative and has also agreed to be on the Council, We are all looking forward to working with her.

Braid Society Council

Our 2024 AGM Speaker: Elizabeth Ashdown

The Braid Society is very pleased to announce that our speaker is Elizabeth Ashdown. Her talk is titled "Passementerie: An endangered yet thoroughly contemporary craft".



One of only a few hand Passementerie artists working in the UK today, Elizabeth combines traditional and endangered craft skills with a contemporary aesthetic in order to create intriguing, energetic and playful Passementerie art works and bespoke lengths of passementerie.

Passementerie is the art and craft of making braids, fringes, tassels, trimmings and cords. Typically used to adorn and embellish soft furnishing and fashion, the skills and techniques of Passementerie can also be applied in limitless ways such as sculptures, art works & jewellery.



Working from her studio in London, Elizabeth creates work for a diverse range of clients including creating hand woven, bespoke artwork commissions for private collectors, to creating artworks for exhibitions and weaving bespoke passementerie lengths.

In 2023, Elizabeth was awarded the first Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust ADAM Architecture scholarship for passementerie.

Elizabeth is passionate about sharing the fascinating world of passementerie. She regularly teaches Passementerie Masterclasses both online and in person.

Elizabeth Ashdown

HGA Textiles and Tea

The Handweavers Guild of America (HGA) hosts conversations with some of the most respected fibre artists of today. These Textile and Tea talks can be watched in real time or at your leisure on the HGA website or direct through YouTube. The speakers can be accessed by date or alphabetically by name (please scroll down) at

<https://weavespindye.org/textiles-and-tea/>

Just press "watch video" on the HGA site.

Jacqui Carey's talk sponsored by The Braid Society was broadcast on 28 May 2024 can be seen at via the HGA website or , after about the third week of June , on YouTube

Elizabeth (Libby) Ashdown, our 2024 AGM speaker, was interviewed on 27 February 2024. She talks about her life and why she will soon be a "critically endangered species". This talk will complement Libby's AGM talk; "Passementerie: An endangered yet thoroughly contemporary craft."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QN9RiG3f-Q>

Giovanna Imperia, co -chair of Braids 2025, talk of 9 January is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiiRod5d1Yw>

Braid Society Council

Heritage Crafts

The Braid Society is a member of Heritage Crafts.

To quote from their website:

Heritage Crafts is the national charity for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with Government and key agencies, we provide a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts



skills, and work towards a healthy and sustainable framework for the future.

They have a monthly series: Meet the Maker where crafts people are interviewed. If you are interested in being interviewed, please email Bizz:

bizz@heritagecrafts.org.uk

Braid Society Council

Braids 2025 - Update

Rocking Braids & Bands

The conference will be held from Sunday June 15 to Saturday, June 21, 2025. The website with the full programme went live at the end of March. Please take a look at the workshops and work out what you would like to take. Registration will begin later in the year.



The conference, to be held at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), Cleveland, Ohio, USA will follow the format of previous conferences – Sunday welcome meeting, Monday/Tuesday workshops and evening activities, Wednesday – field trips, Thursday/Friday workshops and evening activities with banquet on Friday night. Housing is booked until Saturday morning but can be extended both before and after the conference.

We have found an exhibition space for the conference and exhibits will be on show to the public for several weeks after the conference. Information about the exhibition will be publicised in the next few months.

Registration for the conference will be later in 2024 so watch this space.

More information about the Conference and Cleveland can be found at:

<https://thebraidsociety.wildapricot.org/Conferences>

Debbie Richardson

Braids 2025 - Tutor Travel Grants

The Braid Society is offering a limited number of Conference Tutor Travel Grant for Braids 2025. Tutors must be full members of The Braid Society.

For further information and the opportunity to apply, please see The Braid Society website: Events, Conferences, Braids 2025 Bursaries and Travel Grants.

As air fares are not published more than a year in advance, the latest date for applications will be 31 October 2024 with the announcement of awards in the December 2024 Newsletter.

Braid Society Council

Braids 2025 - Bursary / Scholarship Awards

Are you thinking of attending Braids 2025? If so, please consider applying for a bursary. The Braid Society is offering three bursaries of £250 to full members who wish to further their knowledge by attending Braids 2025. The recipients will be required to write an article for Strands 2026. This will be a thoughtful paper on an aspect of braiding that you have explored in the wake of the Conference, perhaps including post-conference thoughts, research and experimentation. Please do not be intimidated by this as our very helpful Strands editors will be available to answer questions and provide guidance if required. Applicants will have to have registered for Braids 2025, so applications will not open until the autumn. The deadline for applications is 31 January 2025. For more details and the informative application form, please see the website, Conferences, Braids 2025 Bursaries and Travel Grants.

Braid Society Council

Bursaries in memory of Fran Habbershaw

THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO ME

Yes, it does apply to everyone!

The Fran Habbershaw Bursary is for any full member who wishes to improve their braiding skills. You do not need to be a master braider. We have seven bursaries to award.

For details please see the December 2023 or March 2024 Newsletters or contact chair@braidsociety.com

Braid Society Council

Your Council Needs You

- Would you like to know more about all the activities that The Braid Society is involved in?
- Would you like to help shape the future of The Braid Society?

Then please consider joining The Council.

If you would like to know more, please do get in touch with me, Susan chair@braidsociety.com

Braid Society Council

A Braid to make – Double-Rai Gumi

The Braid Society would like to thank Elliott C Evans for this "make". He is a tutor at Braids 2025 and for details of his course please see <https://amksoc.org/braids-2025/braids-2025-techniques-kumihimo-marudai/>

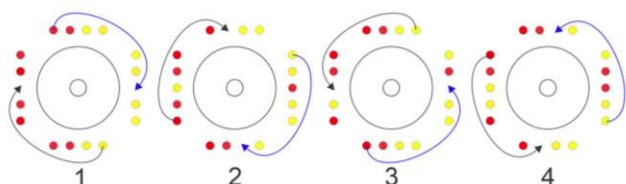
Elliot's website is <https://ee0r.com/kumihimo/evans-make-doublerai.zip>

Jacqui Carey's "Creative Kumihimo" book referred to in the text is available from The Braid Society and Jacqui is also a tutor at Braids 2025



It always bothered me that while most of the 16-strand marudai braids in Jacqui Carey's **Creative Kumihimo** are expansions of some of the 8-strand marudai braids in the same book, there was no doubling of the "8J" (p. 42) *Yatsu Sen* pattern. 8J is one of my favorite 8-strand patterns to braid, and I find the *Yatsu Rai* colorway (XO OO OX XX) to be pleasing. I decided to figure out. What a good "Double Rai" pattern would be. The 16-strand braids that are doubled 8-strand braids are usually either two 8-strand braids braided "next to" each other, or two 8-strand braids braided "on top of" each other. The braids that are braided on top of each other often expand the starting arrangement from "four groups of two" to "four groups of four". Then, they use the same four steps as the 8-strand to work first one set of 8 strands, then the other set. This is how the 16-strand *Keiruko no Himo* (16T) *gumi* doubles the 8-strand *Edo Yatsu* (8F) *gumi*.

I decided to try the following pattern:



This created a wonderful braid with an unusual cross-section and a pleasant texture. The braid is not flat like the *Yatsu Sen gumi*, but has an oblong cross-section. The edges are flat, and the faces are rounded. The long sweeping stitches along the edges contrast with the tight stitches in the center. I should note here that trying to double the braid by starting with "eight groups of two" (how the 16-strand *Naiki* (16N) *gumi*

doubles the *Edo Yatsu* (8F) *gumi*) did not work for me **at all** on the marudai. It's possible that additional tightening moves or a different balance of weight might yield success, but I have not yet tried.

For my example braid, I measured out a 54 inch (134 cm) warp with 6 ends of #10 cotton crochet thread per strand. I do a lot of my experimentation and teaching with crochet thread since it is colorful and available, and can help students get used to measuring multi-thread strands with a material that is less finicky and more affordable than silk. Six ends per strand created a braid that is 5/8 inch wide (16 mm) and about 1/4 inch (12 mm) thick. The braid is about 34 inches (86.5 cm) long between the bindings. I do most of my braids in two colors, with half the strands in each color. Starting with a "left and right" colorway (XXOO OOOO OOX XXXX) in contrasting colors (shown above in step 1) did not create the "lightning bolt" patterns seen in the *Yatsu Rai gumi*, but it did create long zig-zags of color. This is a fairly heavy braid for me, but I wanted to be able to use it as a lanyard and I have found that a heavier braid does not dig into the back of my neck as much as a thin braid. Most cords that I do in crochet thread use only 4 ends of thread per strand. Towards the goal of lanyard, I started the braid on a small carabiner, and worked a 10 mm jump ring into the end, just before the short tassel.



Other simple two-hue colorways for this braid include:

- "top and bottom" (OOOO OOX XXXX XXOO) - hounds-tooth weave
- "inside and out" (OXXO OXXO OXXO OXXO) - zig-zag "rings" of color
- "deasil and widdershins" (OOXX OOXX OOXX OOXX) - long stripes of color

Although I worked out this pattern on my own, subsequent research on the Internet revealed that I am not the first to experiment with this structure, and not the first to admire it. I salute my fellow travellers!

Elliott Evans kumihimo@ee0r.com

Items for Sale

A genuine Japanese wooden marudai for sale.



Price: £50 plus postage.

Marudai dimensions:

Mirror diameter = 9.5" / 24 cm

Height = 17.5" / 44 cm

Packaged weight = 4.5 kg



Acrylic marudai and bobbins. This comes with a fabric carry case.

Price: £45 plus postage.

Marudai dimensions:

Mirror diameter = 9.5" / 24 cm

Height = 13.5" / 34 cm

Tama/bobbins = 16 x 100g

Packaged weight = 2.65 kg

Both marudai have been donated to the Braid Society and are being sold to raise funds for the Bursary Fund.

If interested, please contact Kay Hawkins, email:

email: events@braidsociety.com

Kay Hawkins

Dates for Your Diary

Braid Society Events 2024		
We have several Braid Society events organised for 2024 (and one for 2025!). Do put the following dates in your diary. Further information on some of these events is on the Braid Society's website. If you have a braiding event that is not listed below, and would like it publicised in future newsletters, please send the details to: events@braidsociety.com .		
Saturday 8 June 2024, 3 – 5pm BST	Braid and Banter	See Newsletter article for Zoom link and passcode.
Sunday 9 June 2024, 10am – 4pm BST	Aldbourn Come and Try Day, Aldbourn Memorial Hall, Oxford Street, Aldbourn, Marlborough, SN8 2DQ.	For more information contact Sally Shepherd email: aldbournbraids@btinternet.com
Saturday 22 June – Saturday 13 July 2024	30th Anniversary Exhibition at Borders Textile Towerhouse, 1 Tower Knowe, Hawick, TD9 9EN, Scotland	For information on the venue see: https://www.liveborders.org.uk/culture/museums/our-museums/borders-textile-towerhouse/
Saturday 6 July 2024, 3 – 5pm BST	Braid and Banter	See Newsletter article for Zoom link and passcode.
Saturday 10 August 2024, 3 – 5pm BST	Braid and Banter	See Newsletter article for Zoom link and passcode.
Sunday 11 August 2024, 10am – 4pm BST	Aldbourn Come and Try Day, Aldbourn Memorial Hall, Oxford Street, Aldbourn, Marlborough, SN8 2DQ.	For more information contact Sally Shepherd email: aldbournbraids@btinternet.com
Saturday 7 September 2024, 3 – 5pm BST	Braid and Banter	See Newsletter article for Zoom link and passcode.

Shows and Events 2024		
The Braid Society Travelling Show 2024 will be exhibited at other events indicated by (*) below.		
Saturday 1 – Saturday 29 June 2024	Wool and Willow Festival, Minerva Arts Centre, Llanidloes, SY18 6BY	https://woolandwillowfestival.org/
Saturday 7 September 2024	World Textile Day – Wales, Llanidloes (*)	http://worldtextileday.co.uk/
Saturday 14 September 2024	World Textiles Market – Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire	http://worldtextileday.co.uk/
Saturday 28 – Sunday 29 September 2024	Yarndale at Skipton Auction Mart, Gargrave Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 1UD (*)	https://yarndale.co.uk/
Saturday 5 October 2024	World Textile Day – West of England, Saltford, Bristol	http://worldtextileday.co.uk/
Saturday 2 November 2024	World Textile Day – South of England, Brockenhurst, Hampshire	http://worldtextileday.co.uk/