



## Minutes of KHWS General Meeting, Wednesday, March 11, 2026 On Zoom

Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm (quorum requirement was met)

1. **Welcome:** Cathy Davidson greeted the members.
2. **Approval of the Agenda**  
**Motion:** Nancy Bowman      **Seconded:** Nancy Carr  
**Carried**
3. **Motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2026 General Meeting**  
**Motion:** Janet Noyes   **Seconded:** Alison Mackey  
**Carried**
4. **Memorial Centre Market – request for window coverings**  
Cathy put out a final call for donations to be made by the end of March at which time they will be picked up.
5. **General Reminder:** The Guild space is closed to members during workshops and Study Group meetings. During these times, the Guild space is reserved exclusively for workshop/study group participants. Please check the online calendar prior to arriving at the Guild.
6. **Programme: Alicia Boutilier – A Home for Textiles – Agnes Etherington Art Centre**  
Cathy Davidson welcomed the guest speaker, Alicia Boutilier. Alicia is the Chief Curator and Curator of Canadian Historical Art at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston. She has been Curator of Canadian Historical Art since 2008 and was appointed Chief Curator in 2017. In 2020, she served as the Interim Director at the Centre and received a special recognition award from Queen's University at Kingston for her work as a team leader, adapting to the new realities caused by Covid. She is a Canadian art historian with wide-ranging concerns with emphasis on women artists, artistic groups, regional scenes and collecting histories.

Alicia gave a fascinating presentation on the textile collection at the "Agnes". The Centre is currently under construction and its entire collection is in storage. The new expanded space will include a dedicated textile centre with appropriate shelving and drawers for proper textile storage. The Centre is expected to reopen in January 2027. Alicia showed the members examples of the Centre's textile collection, including:

- **Savonarola cushion** attributed to Agnes Etherington. She took weaving lessons as a young woman and loved textiles. The cushion sits on a chair which is part of the furniture collection from Agnes' home.
- **Fallowfield Quilt** – the oldest (about 1820) in the Centre's quilt collection of 90 quilts. It was purchased by the centre from Ruth McKendry in 1982 as part of the Heritage Quilt collection. This collection was proposed by three local quilters who were concerned to see many fine quilts leaving the area or deteriorating in storage. The Centre established the collection in 1981.

The Fallowfield quilt consists of 81 sprays of embroidered flowers (hand dyed wool) on blocks of linen. There is no batting. There is some uncertainty as to identity of the embroiderer. Ruth McKendry had purchased the quilt in 1968 from sisters Ida and Tina Davidson who said it was made by their great-grandmother (Ann Little Bell) who came from Ireland as a child with her parents. Various experts have suggested that it may have been made partly by their grandmother (Elizabeth Annie Bell) in Canada with linen purchased from Ireland. This is because there are variations in embroidery style and in the linen itself. The linen background shows variation in weave density, suggesting that the cloth was produced at different times and circumstances. Also, there are two different embroidery styles suggesting at least two embroiderers. For example: rosebuds on some blocks have tied bows and stylized stems; others are more natural. Also, on some blocks we see trilliums - which would not have been a flower found in Ireland.

- **Embellished day dress** – the oldest dress in the dress collection – dating from 1815. The dress collection was established by Margaret Angus. Margaret kept the costumes for the Queen's drama department and realized that some were museum quality. She became curator of the Queen's collection until she resigned in 1985. The dress collection was moved to the Centre in 2000 and now comprises some 2,500 pieces. The particular day dress shown is a silk dress with painted and embroidered decoration:
  - Originally voluminous, re-cut and re-stitched to resemble Jane Austen movie style
  - Features tiny embroidered vegetal sprigs and painted leaves
  - Paint fading away, with chemical elements in paint taking silk with it
  - Leaf-shaped holes forming (inherent vice that cannot be reversed)
- **Paisley Shawl** – Alicia chose this piece for its representation of eastern Ontario style. The shawl is a Kashmiri style and was made around the 1860s. It was originally considered that it may have been woven in Paisley, Scotland. The donor family thought that it belonged to their great-great-great aunt (Ann King Gray) and shared a photo of her wearing the shawl. However, two academics (2019 textile residents) found that the shawl in the photo is not the same as the piece in the collection. The Agnes collection has 56 shawls in total, about 12 are Kashmiri-style. There are no actual authentic cashmere shawls in the collection.
- **Spunbond Circle Skirt** (1950s) Designed by Jonathan Logan (made-up corporate moniker, not actual designer)
  - Jonathan Logan became one of largest ready-to-wear companies in North America
  - The non-woven synthetic fabrics were considered experimental
  - Touted as wrinkle-resistant, durable, crisp, and neat
  - Pushing ready-to-wear clothing to new heights
  - Material feels like thin packing foam
  - Completely synthetic, possibly made by DuPont or similar chemical/paper companies
  - Called "spunbond" though probably not actually spun (marketing term to sound more fabric-like)
  - Likely not washable; intended to be disposable like paper plates and forks
  - No washing instructions on label (not common practice at the time)
  - Most touched item in exhibitions - everyone wants to feel the unusual material
  - Possibly extruded plastic sheet rather than woven fabric
- **Inuit Tapestries**

In 2020 the Centre received 60 works from the Guardian Capital corporate collection of indigenous art (painting, sculpture, works on paper and textiles) as well as 7 other indigenous works from Hunter and Valerie Thompson's personal collection. This includes three wool tapestries made by Malaya Akalukjuk who was one of the first generation of Inuit artists producing work for the Southern market. She was the first local woman approached for

drawing designs when the Pangnirtung weaving program was established in 1969. Throughout 1970s, her designs were selected almost exclusively for translation into tapestries. When asked about figures, she responded they came in dreams or were described by someone who had seen them. Alicia showed the members two tapestries of fantastical birds, one with orange legs. The tapestry is a weft-face plain weave construction. They were woven on large frame looms.

- **Q & A:** The presentation ended with a question and answer period.
  - How were the quilts preserved? Answer: They were highly valued by families and the “good” quilts would be removed, and more utilitarian quilts put on beds for sleeping. Ruth McKendry stored her quilts by stacking them which worked well.
  - Could there have been just one embroiderer of the Fallowfield quilt who got better with practice. Answer: Nothing definitive yet – still being studied. Reticent to have the materials tested in case of loss.
  - Were the Inuit tapestries woven on floor or tapestry looms. Answer: Not sure – no definitive information about the 1970s co-op. (Per Jackie Sylvester, there is a book that suggests they were floor looms.)
  - How would the synthetic fabrics be washed? Answer: They were probably not made to be washed.
  - Has there been a fabric analysis of the Savonarola cushion? Answer: No, the cushion has been part of the home furnishings. Would like to have it studied. Considering removing it from the chair for proper storage.
  - What conservation techniques are used for the textiles? Answer: currently they are hung on padded hangers, or stored in acid free boxes or in drawers with acid free tissues. Conservation is funded through grants and exhibitions. Exhibition funding allows preservation attention. The funding for the collection return will allow further identification of needs. A full risk assessment has been completed.

#### 7. Information Updates/Reports:

- a) **Tett Representative Report** - Nancy Bowman advised that she had sent a call-out by email of March 10 for instructors for the summer camp at the TETT. Her email contains the information about the camp and the person to contact if interested. The camp will run for three weeks in July.
- b) **3P and Strategic Plan Review** - Cathy thanked the 3P team and advised that the document is being proofread and should be ready shortly.
- c) **Upcoming Presentations for 2025/ 2026 and call for suggestions for Fall 2026/Winter 2027** - Cathy advised that on April 8, Beth Abbott will present on Spinning and Knitting for Shawls and Shawl Shaping.
- d) **Sales** - Cathy advised that there was no update on sales at this time.
- e) **Membership** - Norma Rosier reported that there are 5 new members. We may have a record number of members. She is working on a new membership list.
- f) **Treasurer:** No report at this time.
- g) **Studio and Equipment** – Janet Noyes reported that there is a studio project – 8 waffle weave tea towels on the J and 6 on the counterbalance loom. The sign-up will go out shortly.
- h) **Workshops** - Gabby advised that the workshops have been very popular and most are full – working on adding additional workshops. There is still room in the Lace Weaves Structures (April 11 and 12). Barbara Heins wants to try a new type of workshop – 5 sessions where you can

attend any or all of the sessions. This has been offered to the students who have completed the introduction to the floor loom course as a pilot.

- i) **Events** - Yael advised that the Guild was founded on April 5, 1948. She is hoping that the Guild can celebrate this anniversary annually. This year the celebration will be on Sunday, April 19 during Open Studio between 1 and 4 pm with a potluck. Send any comments to Yael.
  
- j) **Archiving Project with Queen's University** - Yael has left a folder on the table in the studio with photos. If anyone who recognizes the persons in the photo or the date on which it was taken or the event – please leave a note for Yael.
  
- k) **Other**
  - **Show and Share via Padlet** - Members shared their recent projects through the Padlet platform:
    - Janet Noyes – colour and twill gamp tea towels. Each inch was a different colour warp and threaded as a different twill and each towel had a different tie-up.
    - Rosie Hyde – little dress made for a small relative. The weave is an 8 shaft advancing twill based on a project in Handwoven Magazine (“Herb Garden Stole”) in Nature as Colorist, March/April 2000 p. 42
    - Hollie Currie and Gabby Marshall – photo of them on Family Day after sharing the joy of fibre.
    - Spinning Study Group – examples of exploring blending Bianca’s wool fleece with a variety of fibres – cotton, silk, Tencel, bamboo, alpaca, mohair, camel, yak and flax. Alpaca and mohair were well received – cotton, not so much.
    - Brandy Hyndman – sock twins scarf and 2/1 Twill Towel. The scarf was made with gradient dyed sock twin set warped from the centre out. The weft was 8/2 tencel. The towel was 2/1 twill towel woven with 2-10 dpi heddles on her rigid heddle loom. 4/8 cotton was used for the warp and the weft.

8. **Next meeting:**

April 8, 2026 – 7 pm.

9. **Adjournment**

**Motion: Janet Noyes**

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm