

# CETG ARCHIVE

## Meeting Report

**12th June 2017**

**Speaker: Dr Susan Kay-Williams**

**Talk: Variety, Ingenuity and Inspiration**

An absorbing talk by Dr Susan Kay-Williams, Chief Executive of the [Royal School of Needlework](#) replaced our advertised speaker, owing to a late cancellation. Citing the three key ideas of variety, ingenuity and inspiration, Dr Kay-Williams highlighted that the RSN has followed the same approach since its creation in 1872: that all students work in the same way - on slate frames resting on trestles to give a stable surface accessible on both sides by either hand.

The variety in scale of their work was illustrated with examples ranging from the 13 metre long Magna Carta replicated in modern text down to a tiny pair of cushions to fit in a doll's room just 12 inches square in the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. Surfaces were as varied as a football boot belonging to David Beckham stitched with his name in Japanese for the World Cup, a 3-dimensional life-sized tree mobile with raised work birds for Prince George to more traditional work on fabric for theatre and film - Game of Thrones' "White Walker", Dr Strange's cloak or costumes for Netflix's "Crown".

Dr Kay-Williams showed us many outstanding pieces completed by students at all stages of their education using techniques including canvas shading, Jacobean and modern crewel work, blackwork, silk shading, goldwork, whitework, raised work (stumpwork), beading and mixed media free style embroidery. The quality and imagination displayed ensured there was something to inspire every one of us. It was encouraging to hear that in this world of the ready-made, there remains a place for professional quality handcrafted work and graduates go on to have successful careers in theatre, TV and film and with prestigious fashion houses such as Alistair McQueen, as well as taking on private commissions. Although Dr Kay-Williams brought some wonderful works to show us, no photos were permitted owing to copyright.



Janet brought in the prepared pieces of the bunting for completion by members. These will need to be brought back to the July meeting, or delivered to Janet by the same date so that she can create the bunting in time for Amersham Heritage Day on 10th September. Terry asked members to consider if they might be able to spare a few hours to assist on the day, rather than leaving it all to the Committee! It would be good to have six volunteers: three for the morning and three in the afternoon. You can read more about the Bunting Project [here](#).

The June "Have a go" session will be at Pat Ball's house on 22nd June when Sue will be teaching how to make a Dorset button. After a summer break, the "Have a Go" sessions will resume in September. A request was made for more notice of these sessions and also if some could take place at weekends.

Pieces completed at Heather's workshop on "The Fun and Fascination of Nuno Felting" were displayed. A full report on the workshop can be found [here](#). Deborah brought in photos of the dedication of the new altar frontal at St Mary's Church in Beaconsfield stitched by Jenny Adin-Christie.

Twelve members had expressed an interest in the proposed outing to Greys Court for which attendees would provide their own transport. Sally had visited the small [Creatures and Creations](#) exhibition at Waddesdon where inspiration for textile work had been drawn from exhibits at [Tring Natural History Museum](#), and suggested the Tring Museum as a venue for

a design-based outing. The Committee will discuss both of these ideas at the forthcoming committee meeting.

Terry drew our attention to [Bucks Open Studios](#), running from 10th - 25th June, where Julia Phillips is exhibiting. There are a number of textile artists participating who are well worth investigating. Prior notice was given for the [From the Earth](#) exhibition at the Upstairs Gallery in Berkhamsted from 18th July - 5th August which includes work from our May speaker, Alice Fox.

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