

CETG ARCHIVE

Meeting Report

11th July 2016

Speaker: Anne Kelly

[Anne Kelly](#) introduced us to her beautiful world of natural history in stitch and mixed media, created using multiple layers of recycled fabric, paper, transfers, machine and hand stitching. She likes to use old clothes and household linen, her inspirations being nature, folk art, travel and memory. Canadian born, with English family connections, early in her career she won grants from Green Shield Stamps to study in the UK, and 30 years later she's still here. Her work is heavily embroidered, the layers held together by a machine edging stitch, shown in the detailed photo below. In her teaching, she makes use of the "nature table" combining natural items and textiles in a still life display to spark inspiration. Working from a shed in her garden, she keeps extensive sketchbooks and makes frequent use of old natural history books.

She has worked with a number of conservation and charitable organisations, most notably the RSPB in their campaign to save the sparrow, which is in decline worldwide. "Sparrow Stories" was a collaborative project where members of the public provided pictures or models of sparrows which were combined in a 2 metre hanging work. She was artist in residence at [the Sussex Prairie Garden](#) where she made sketches which were transferred onto old embroidered tray cloths, to create a work 3.5 metres long. At the Tunbridge Wells Hospital she produced "Amelia Scott's Birds" in memory of the founder who established a soldiers' laundry in the First World War. Her images were of the same local birds that Amelia would have seen 100 years earlier. For a local hospice she worked with patients on a piece based on their favourite plants, stitched in red thread on hand dyed cloth, which was exhibited at the 2014 International Palliative Care Conference.

In collaboration with Cas Holmes she published "Connected Cloth" in 2013. Her new book is just out, called "Textile Nature" it includes work by well-known textile artists, and will be launched at the Knitting & Stitching Show. Both books were available to buy at the meeting at a good discount. Anne's enthusiastic and inspirational talk was illustrated by numerous examples of her own and students' works.



Anne is co-ordinating a collaborative project on behalf of the insect conservation charity [Buglife](#) to be displayed at the [Knitting & Stitching Show](#) at Alexandra Palace in early October. If you would like to be involved by sending in a bug, Liz Wilmott will be collecting them at the August and September meetings. If you prefer to send yours individually, she can give you the address. The bugs can be in any medium; stitched, knitted, crochet or any other textile, and the finished piece should be no bigger than a postcard. Don't forget to put your name on the back - and if you're sending them direct to Anne, your address. The deadline for getting bugs to Anne is the end of September.

A good time was had by all at the visit to the Warner Textile Archive; you can read about it [here](#). Not enough members expressed an interest in an outing to Hemingford Grey, so Janet suggested an alternative, more local venue at the John Lewis Partnership Heritage Collection in Cookham. This could be combined with the Stanley Spencer Gallery just up the road. Janet will investigate possible weekend dates in August or September, and offer them to the group. Members would be expected to arrange their own transport to and from Cookham.

For the August meeting, Janet suggested members should bring along their unwanted stash and swap or buy items from others. We all have stuff lurking in a cupboard or drawer somewhere, which we know in our hearts we'll never use - it could be just what someone else has been looking for, so be generous!

St Mary's church in Beaconsfield is holding an open studio for their new altar frontal, stitched by Jenny Adin-Christie, from 19th - 21st July, with a lecture on the evening of 20th July. The open studio is free, the lecture costs £5. Contact Deborah Sanders for more information.

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