

### Spinning, Sheep and Wool

Our speaker this month was Julia Wallis who not only gave us a talk about spinning but also a lot of information including the history of spinning and the process of wool from sheep to garment. She had brought with her samples of fleece from different breeds of sheep which we were able to examine. We were told the different stages of producing yarn starting from shearing, washing in very hot water and detergent to remove the dirt and grease, drying flat, carding, combing to remove any debris, and finally spinning. We were told spinning wheels are only manufactured in a few countries and named New Zealand, France and Poland. She said it was sad to see that wool is not as popular these days as there are so many advantages to using it as it is a good insulator, mildew resistant and resists wrinkles. The cost of shearing a sheep is more than the fleece is worth and some farmers are now keeping sheep that do not need shearing. Julia explained about the different parts of a spinning wheel and also the differences between her wheel and earlier ones. She said with some of the earlier ones the spinners had to walk back and forth and it was estimated they probably walked about twenty miles a day. We were given the opportunity to try spinning using drop spindles and she also demonstrated how to use a spinning wheel. We were invited to try her spinning wheel but only Margaret Tyler was willing to have a go and she found it was not as easy as it had looked.

We entered three teams in the Federation quiz which was once again held at the Community Centre and although we did not win we were well placed.

Don't forget entries for the photographic competition have to be in on the 8 April, 2016, but even if you have not entered the competition why don't you come along to see the exhibition at the Village Hall on 16 April. Refreshments are being served including a light lunch but see more details on the posters around the village.

Next month we will be taking a step into the past when Christina Smee will be talking about Medieval Herbal Remedies.

