




The Road To Agincourt team were invited to the recent Hampshire Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers workshop last weekend, which is held in Shawford, Winchester. The team went along to film the day, whilst also hoping to find out more about how weaving and spinning has been modernised in recent times; and just how popular it is. 


 The monthly meetings vary, most of which are with speaker led workshops with priority for members. Just last month there was a talk and demo on 'Spinning Flax to Linen' and next month will be focusing on 'Off Loom Weaving'. This month however was an 'At Home Day', where member's can come just to sit and practice their craft whilst also sharing skills and knowledge with fellow members.

The traditional loom is far too big to transport and store at home, so most members use the more modern pedal powered spinners. There were a wide variety of spinning wheels at the workshop and the design of some can completely differ from each other. We were advised that buying a spinning wheel is similar to buying a car - sure, they can all do the same job, but each one has different amenities compared to the other.

A lovely woman named Beverly brought with her what is closest described to the traditional spinning wheel. She was in attendance at the workshop this month with a spinning wheel that looks very similar to what Sleeping Beauty would've pricked her finger on. Interestingly enough, Beverly tells me, the myth of Sleeping Beauty falling asleep once pricking her finger does hold some truth in it. The spindle is traditionally very sharp in order to deal with thick sheep wool, which was often dirty when handled. If the user accidentally pricked their finger after handling the wool, they could've developed tetanus, when bacteria is released into the wound. When left untreated, tetanus can cause muscle stiffness, spasms and could occasionally lead the user in a comatose. Of course

today, contracting tetanus through use of spinning is very unlikely. 

Spinners, weavers and dyers in attendance ranged from old to young, inexperienced to expert. The team were instantly welcomed into the community, for it is certainly more of a community than a hobby to these members. The members mixed around, some showing others their latest creations and others concentrating on their craft. It is certainly very popular, with one member confessing that she comes up from Bournemouth every month to attend. Visitors are always welcomed, but those thinking of taking up spinning or weaving are encouraged to come along to the Guild's taster day, to try out the equipment and meet other members.

 The team had a great time learning interesting facts and meeting the welcoming ladies and gents of the Hampshire Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers. If you are interested in learning more or even possibly taking up spinning, weaving or dying yourself, visit <http://www.hantsguildwsd.hampshire.org.uk/>.

See below for a highlights reel of the visit.