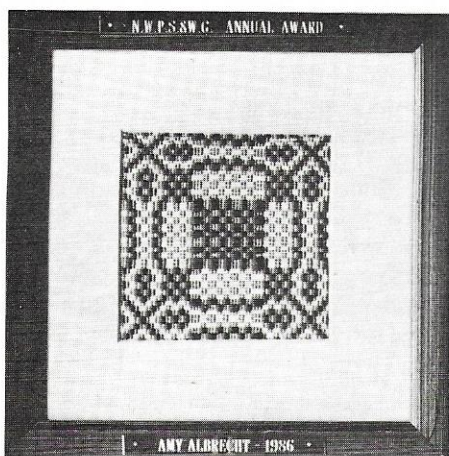


# From founding an organization to building its image



Runner made from "The Hub" draft by Sigrid Piroch.

Service Award given by the Northwest Pennsylvania Spinners and Weavers Guild, based on guild logo and woven as a group project.




by Sigrid Piroch

**I**N THE SUMMER of 1980 our guild, The Northwest Pennsylvania Spinners & Weavers Guild, was just a dream we hoped would come true. Within this large rural area, there was no place to study weaving within a radius of a hundred miles. We knew of only a few isolated weavers and several smaller spinning guilds scattered within the tri-state area of Northwest Pennsylvania, Western Ohio & Northeastern New York. A regional guild center would provide a nucleus from which to draw in all directions, bringing together both individuals and small groups for sharing/learning/inspiration as well as educating the general public about our art/craft. The idea began to take shape when we were encouraged by the Arts and Humanities staff of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania to meet in their new Arts Building. Our "hub of activity" had a home.

Since our potential membership was scattered "to the four winds," it was decided that several requirements were needed to insure our success: (1) program planning should be a strong drawing card if people were to travel longer distances to meet; (2) all meetings should be held at the same time and place at regularly designated intervals in order to insure that interested people would know where and when to attend; (3) communication in the form of a clearly written newsletter should be mailed on a regular basis, at least two weeks before each meeting; (4) anyone with an interest in spinning and/or weaving should be able to attend a meeting and join the guild if interested; (5) dues should be as low as possible to attract a large membership; and (6) a guild name and a logo projecting a strong, unique image should be developed immediately.

We made a list of every potential member based on our personal knowledge and area membership lists. Our first mailing included a flyer to "inform the world" of our ideas, the date of our first meeting and a survey of interests and meeting preferences. Alternate first Saturdays proved to be the most popular time. Carpooling was encouraged to keep down individuals' costs and make a longer drive more interesting. Area guilds were asked to join as Satellite Guilds, each with a representative appointed to sit on our Board. Excellent programs using talented people from our area kicked off our first meetings. By our second meeting in just four months we had 139 paid individual members and seven Satellite Guilds, with over 60 members in attendance! Not only did many individuals develop close, strong ties quickly, but area guilds (some of




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We selected a name to reflect the larger area from which we hoped to draw members. Right from the start our membership came not only from Northwest Pennsylvania, but from the whole tri-state area. Since we continue to be based in the Northwest section of the state at the University however, we have retained that name.

Using white cover-up tape (which can be put down and easily peeled off later) I blocked off segments of patterns until I had a dozen different ones that I liked. Each of these formed a pattern which was attractive in and of itself, like a miniature weaving. I found myself picking out those with a symmetry which looked like a hub, as our guild was drawing in from all directions toward a center, like spokes of a wheel. Next, I photocopied each of these blocked-out patterns and reduced each to about one to one-and-a-half inches—the size suitable for a logo for our newsletter use. Then I studied the set again for favorites. The image I liked best on reduction was not the same one I had preferred in the enlarged state. Seeing the logo at its final size is important because, not only does the design read differently in many cases when it is smaller, but some designs may lose detail or fill in when reproduced at a smaller size.

I finally decided on the pattern illustrated because it seemed to best represent our guild symbolically. The large square in the center, made up of various smaller ones, can be interpreted as "The Hub," our guild with its founding members. The two smaller rings of blocks around it represent our members from outlying areas



potential membership; the groupings of blocks represent our Satellite Guilds; and the diagonal lines, the ties which bind us together. This logo has since appeared on our guild stationery (easily made up in multiples on a photocopy machine or at a "quick printer"), on guild draft pads which another helpful member offered to print up for us, and on our library stamp. I'm sure you can think of even more applications.

As it happened, our first guild weaving project was to thread a borrowed table loom in the guild logo pattern with donated yarn. (The guild acquired its own loom later.) Anyone in the guild could take a turn weaving as many of the logos as they wished. Many of the new members were also new weavers and were delighted to be a part of the project, learning as they wove the logos. When the warp was finished, we had over two dozen logos woven. These have been framed in mini-frames and used successfully in many ways: As "thank-you" gifts for special people who have contributed to the guild, as awards for those outside the guild who have opened up new opportunities for us, and as an annual "Service Award" to a selected member who has contributed significantly to the guild. Even after six years we still have a few left from that first warp to use!

Some time later, when the Complex Weaves Swatch Exchange was being formed, I again needed a logo on short notice. A creature of habit, I reached again for Marguerite Davi-

son's book and blocked off a series of patterns as before, this time looking for patterns which "looked complex." (Yes, that was cheating a bit because these patterns are all overshot on 4 shafts. But 4-shaft overshot can sometimes *appear* very intricate.) I picked one which I thought would be just right for The Exchange, one which I also liked a lot. This became the logo for all the Draft and Supplementary Pages for The Exchange, as well as for stationery and other needs of group identification.

But my conscience would not quite leave me alone. I knew the logo should be interpreted for The Exchange according to the guidelines the weavers use for producing annual samples. Most important of these expectations, it should be woven on 12 or more shafts. So using the 4-block development of this pattern I put it into a profile draft. After considering a number of different weave structures to which it could be converted I settled on diaper twill (also known as double twill, double-faced twill & twill diaper) where 4 blocks equals 16 shafts. Now I feel that this logo is more appropriate, thanks to the versatility of profiles and blocks.

And how about your guild? Can *your* image use a facelift?

### Bibliography

Davison, Marguerite Porter, *A Handweaver's Source Book*, published by the author in Swarthmore, Pa. and printed by John Spencer in Chester, Pa., 1953.