



**The Queensland  
Spinners Weavers & Dyers Group**  
LIMITED

P.O. BOX 362, TOOWONG, QLD. 4066

**THE  
FIRST  
TWENTY  
YEARS**

## **Dedicated to Bob & Doreen Dallas**

In 1984/5, The Craft Council of Queensland, through Janet De Boer, gave the Group \$300 to help in the compilation of the archives. Jean Carmen began the task of amassing the relevant material, which Rosemary Crome then continued. Pauline Ballinger brought all the loose threads together to complete a folio.

In this short booklet, Pauline has put the history into readable form.

We owe a debt to the past.

Copyright rules apply.

## THE FOUNDER

The founder of the Queensland Spinners & Weavers Group was Miss Cecile Falvey, an Arts & Crafts teacher at the Kelvin Grove Teachers' Training College, Brisbane. She has been honored by the Group with a Life Membership.

## THE FOUNDATION MEETING

Early in July 1969, Miss Cecile Falvey was interviewed by a Courier Mail Brisbane reporter. In that interview, Miss Falvey, together with a visiting craftsperson from New Zealand, Mrs Eileen Latham, spoke of the crafts of spinning, weaving and dyeing, and of the interest being shown in this area in N.Z. Miss Falvey then announced that a meeting for all those interested in these crafts would be held in Ampol House, Herschell Street, Brisbane, on July 19, 1969 at 2.30 p.m.

The meeting was attended by about 120 people, but no record can be found of the names of those who attended. Mrs Latham addressed the Meeting and spoke of spinning, weaving and dyeing in New Zealand, where such crafts were well established. She said she had witnessed the same amount of interest in these crafts in other areas of the world, having recently attended the World Craft Council in Peru.

It became apparent from the enthusiasm shown by those attending the Meeting, that some such group should be formed locally, perhaps a branch of the already existing Handweavers and Spinners Guild of Queensland. The Guild was part of an Australia-wide organisation. The Secretary of this Guild, Mrs Taylor, was present at the meeting.

Mrs Taylor stated that the membership of the Guild was 30, covering the whole of Queensland. Because of the scattered nature of the membership, and the fact that most of the members were elderly, Mrs Taylor felt that the Guild would not be able to cope with a large influx of new members wishing to learn these crafts.

She suggested the formation of another group; one that would not come under the umbrella of the Handweavers and Spinners Guild of Queensland. At first the meeting expressed their disappointment, but the excitement was so great, it was agreed that a new group, the Queensland Spinners & Weavers, should be formed.

From December, 1970, a record of attendance was kept. Twenty-five people attended the December meeting. This comparatively small group of people was to have an impact on the craft in Brisbane and the State.

A temporary Committee was appointed:

Bob Dallas, Jean Carman,  
Ella Corness, Pamela  
Easterbrook, Betty Moore,  
Mrs Walton.

Monthly meetings were to be held in the Physical Education Building of the Kelvin Grove Teachers' College. The first official election of office bearers was held in September 1969.

### THE NEW GROUP

At 10 a.m., August 2nd, 1969 the new group got away to a flying start.

The desire to learn and explore the potential of interesting new crafts proved to be widespread. But even more importantly the new group brought together people of like interests and provided them with an opportunity to work together - the fellowship so engendered was contagious. The crafts flourished.

The first Newsletter, September 1969, records the excitement with the Group, and the fever of activity.

At the foundation meeting, there had been a number of people present with a knowledge of spinning, weaving or dyeing some from overseas or interstate. Others had learnt their crafts from groups that have existed in Queensland for a

number of years. The Handweavers and Spinners Guild, the Red Cross, Adult Education and the Teachers' Training College. Most of these people became members of the new Group.

Throughout the following years, they gave willingly and unselfishly of themselves, their time and skills, to assist the unskilled to gain an enthusiasm for and a knowledge of the fibre crafts. These members formed an important part in the foundation and development of the Group, and it is to these people that present members owe a debt of gratitude.

Unfortunately there is no record of the number of people who attended the first meeting in August 1969, but, according to those who remember it, it was an exciting and inspiring event.

Mrs Earnshaw, a wellknown weaving identity and a member of the Handweavers and Spinners Guild, gave a demonstration of inkle weaving and the use of larger table looms. Mrs Betty Grulke, an Arts and Crafts Teacher of the Kelvin Grove Teachers College became a judge of the weaving section of R.N.A. Exhibition, spoke of the high standard of work submitted. Working with the RNA Exhibition remains an activity members enjoy.

A group of spinners from the new Group had demonstrated spinning at the Exhibition in a "sheep pen". The interest shown in spindle spinning and the spinning wheel was remarkable as few people has seen spinning done before.

At the first August meeting, a spinning workshop was conducted by a few people who had a knowledge of the craft. A number of people learnt to spindle spin and a few learnt to use the wheel. Two brother, sDavid and Russell Manfield were the centre of attraction as they mastered the spinning wheel. Mrs McMicking donated fleece which sold at 20c a bag.

The Editor of the Newsletter of that time, Pamela Easterbrook, wrote:

"What a day! There was wool everywhere. Wheels turning - slow, staccato and fast. Weavers were beating and spindles spinning."

Mrs Carman reports "teaching" 10 people to use the spindle and three to use the wheel. This was repeated by other instructors throughout the day. At that time, it was very difficult to find a spinning wheel to buy

Dyeing was not forgotten and there was an account of the dyeing efforts of Pamela Easterbrook's two boys. Simple recipes were included in the Newsletter.

## FIRST COMMITTEE

At the September 1969 meeting, office bearers were officially elected:

PRESIDENT: Mr Bob Dallas  
V/PRES: Miss Cecile Falvey  
SECRETARY: Mrs Donald  
Rogers  
TREASURER: Mrs Alice Jones  
EDITOR: Mrs Pamela  
Easterbrook  
COMMITTEE: Mrs Ella Corness  
Mrs Betty Moore  
Mrs Walton  
Mrs Jean Carman

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims and Objects of the Group, together with the format of the Meetings, were discussed. These are similar to those still being followed.

The aims of the Group were:

- . to promote a knowledge of and interest in spinning, weaving and dyeing in the State.
- . to share one's skills with others.
- . to create a friendly, caring atmosphere at monthly meetings.

These aims were achieved through demonstrations and workshops - at first by members of the Group and later by tutors from interstate and overseas.

## PATRON -

Sir William Gunn, KBE CMG, then Chairman, Australian Wool Board was Patron from 1970 - 1976



## OTHER GROUPS

Affiliation with the NSW Handweavers and Spinners Guild took place in May 1970, and two copies of the Australian Handweaver and Spinner were received. Copies of the Group's newsletter "Clippings" were sent in exchange. A number of Group members became members of the NSW Handweavers and Spinners Guild. The Group later affiliated with the Handweavers & Spinners Guild of Australia.

## COUNTRY GROUPS

As membership grew in number with more country people being involved, small groups were formed in country towns. From time to time country people would write letters that would be included in Clippings. In April 1979, Jean Carman was appointed country representative. Jean wrote at that time:

"As a Group, we want to ensure that we do not lose the past history of those who started and worked on their own in the country."

Ursula Davenport became Country Rep. in 1980, with Beth MacIntosh taking that role in 1982. By 1983, 16 country groups had been formed. "Clippings" became the primary source of contact between all Groups.

The first country news

appeared in Clippings in October 1971:

"Mrs De Roos tells of the formation of a little group calling themselves the "Whitewood Spinners". Mrs De Roos and Mrs Little demonstrated spinning at the Hughenden Show. Articles made from home-spun wool created a lot of interest. Merino wool (locally grown) had been used. There were both white and coloured fleece, which washed well and were of good quality."

Otte Molvig, the then Editor of Clippings, reported that the spun samples sent to the Group were of high quality.

## THE NEWSLETTER

Pamela Easterbrook, a newcomer from New Zealand, was the first Editor of the Newsletter of the Queensland Spinners & Weavers Group. She produced the first Newsletter in September, 1969 - a small four-page edition, containing news about the activities of the Group and information regarding spinning, weaving and dyeing. There was also a "For Sale" section. The selling price for non-members was 5c, in August 1979.

For the remainder of 1969, the Newsletter was produced monthly, but the following year it was changed to every second month. Throughout the years, the Newsletters have given a detailed

account of activities at the Meetings, demonstrations in which members were involved, and technical information

Contributions have also been accepted by members, and members travelling to other countries wrote accounts of the crafts of spinning, weaving and dyeing seen during their travels.

The newsletters reported a growth in crafts in Queensland, and listed the names of Galleries and Exhibitions offering a chance for members to demonstrate, exhibit, sell their work. Workshops were advertised.

At the end of 1969, a competition was held to find the most suitable name for the Newsletter. From January 1970, the Newsletter became officially "Clippings". Each editor left an imprint on Clippings, especially in the editorial written. Such editorials were written by either the President or the Editor. The emphasis was on sharing of skills and friendliness. Clippings has systematically recorded the growth of the Group.

In October 1969, Pamela Easterbrook wrote:

"As we approach the end of the year, one feels a sense of satisfaction when considering the progress of the Group. In a brief period, we have grown from the relative ignorance and clumsiness of the beginner

to the confident strides of the knowledgeable.

"We are no longer overawed by the machines of our forefather, but have captured their spirit and have harnessed them to our own souls to bear the fruit of our making. Let us feel proud of our achievements and continue to strive for higher goals. Let us see in the future, the inner harmony we feel ourselves, becoming shared amongst our families as they grow in the knowledge and practice of their craft alongside us thereby embracing the family unit as a force of strength.

Again, in January 1970:

"What a rush we had to get through in 1969. I am still feeling exhausted from the last minute spurt. We're now looking at past deeds and misdeeds and entering into a new decade with the amber light flashing. We expect fantastic new discoveries in all spheres in this next 10 years, but we must be more reflective, contemplative and compassionate in the future. Let us look forward to a decade of honesty - in work, thought and action. Through our creative crafts, a realization of the importance of the individual, and an appreciation of the dignity of simple human effort, would go far in this age of "Space and Suffering".

When Ella Corness became Editor in 1970, Pamela's spinning wheels no longer appeared on the top of the Newsletter.

They were replaced by sketches relating to one of the crafts and a short account of the history or myth surrounding various aspects of the ancient skills of spinning, weaving and dyeing.

Ottie Molvi became the new Editor in August 1971. The widow of the painter JanMolvig, Ottie was interested in Art and Crafts Exhibitions and accounts of Exhibitions she visited, especially in Sydney - introducing them into Clippings.

Rosemary Crome, assisted by Jocelyn Grant-Taylor, was Editor in 1972. Both Rosemary and Jocelyn were dedicated craftspersons and Rosemary saw the importance of "Showcase". She devoted time to describing articles displayed there. This encouraged more members to participate in sharing their experiences.

Clippings has always been a great communicator between members, whether city or country. Broadcasting news of coming events, workshops, items of interest, and general good fellowship has remained a valuable link between the varying craftsoperating with the Group. Members have always appreciated encouragement.

#### THE COMMITTEE

The number of office bearers elected at the September 1979 meeting was nine, but as the membership increased, so did the number of office

bearers.

The Constitution submitted to the members at the March 1971 Workshop was accepted. At the September 1975 Annual General Meeting, an amendment to the Constitution was unanimously carried: That the maximum tenure of a particular office by a Committee member shall be three consecutive years.

Committee meetings were initially held in the homes of office bearers, but later were arranged to coincide with general meetings.

Bob Dallas was President from 1969-76, and during this period the Group was introduced to the Community through the various craft activities that members performed in Brisbane and the country. His friendly and helpful approach to all those attending the workshops built up a friendly atmosphere, but he was continually reminding members that the Group was not just a social occasion, but one to which members were advised to bring looms and spinning wheels and spindles, so they could work or help teach others. It was to be a sharing of skills.

During 1982, Bob and Doreen Dallas were granted Life Membership because of their outstanding service to the Group.

A time of expansion followed e.g. the National rug event planned by the Crafts Board



of Australia Council. The Australian Forum for Textile Arts, a National body, was formed in Brisbane. Following a visit by Lucinda Ebert from San Diego, California, an interest in Navajo weaving grew. Her demonstrations were followed by workshops by Janet De Boer.

Betty Franks attended the National Conference for Spinning and Wool knowledge, held at the Marlestone Technical College, School of Wool and Textiles, South Australia, in August 1976. Through her generous sharing of knowledge, members of the Group became more knowledgeable of the properties of wool and the opportunities that existed for spinning. Spinning became the most popular craft at the meetings, and interest in weaving decline. Efforts were made to reverse the tide, but they were only partially successful.

This slowly to changed and weaving gained ground. With study and practice expertise grew.

The Committee gave way to the Board of Directors when the Group became incorporated as a Limited Company on 21 December 1981.

#### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Members were always willing to demonstrate spinning and weaving at Art Shows, Schools and Church functions and at Shopping centres. It was a thrill when a New Australian (a new migrant)

came up to the demonstrator and excitedly exclaimed that his or her parents had done weaving or spinning in their home country. Perhaps the observer could spin and it was a delight for the demonstrator to hand over the spindle or wheel and watch other methods of spinning - a diversity of methods in the use of the spindle.

When the Group was formed in 1969, Mrs Ferguson and Miss Wheeler taught weaving to blind people at Braille House. Later Betty Moore and Phyllis Farquar became involved, but after many years of devoted service to the blind people, they had to resign. For a while no weaving was taught at Braille House. This service has since been resumed.

In October 1969, the Group mounted a display at the Kenmore Festival of Arts. Experienced weavers lent samples of their traditional weaving, table cloths, towels, table mats. These included samples of Finnish weaving. There was a wall display with samples showing the progression from raw wool to spun, dyed wool knitted or woven into garments.

In 1970 Jean Carman was asked to weave a cushion for the First 200 Years Exhibition during the Captain Cook's Bi-centennial celebrations in Brisbane. The cushion was to be woven from handspun wool dyed with Queensland eucalypts. Jean also made a fleece rug

in natural shades of black-grey and brown on which her Australian made spinning wheel rested beside a Brisbane made spinning chair.

A Pacific Asian Exhibition of World Craft was held in Wellington, July 1970. Cecile Falvey was asked to submit some members' work for a Queensland selection. Queensland pieces that went to Sydney for national selection were a batik length of material by Cecile Falvey and the Queensland cushion by Jean Carman.

Craftsmen from a variety of groups and professional people met together during 1970 to form The Association of Queensland Craftsmen. The initiator of this meeting was Cecile Falvey. A number of members of the Queensland Spinners & Weavers Group attended and joined as Associate Members.

This Organisation was the foundation of the Craftwork Association of Australia (Queensland) now known as the Crafts Council of Queensland.

A Craft Association and Queensland Spinners & Weavers Exhibition was held in September 1971. A number of members of the Group exhibited their work.

During 1970, the Group became involved in the Aboriginal Pre-School Creative Play Group. Pamela Easterbrook was involved in the formation of the Group having had similar

experience with community play groups in New Zealand.

One of the aims of the group, as quoted by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in Canberra, Mr. Wentworth, was to give the Aboriginal people self-determination to run their own affairs. Pamela appealed to members to give books, toys and materials suitable for crafts and the making of equipment. There were seven mothers and 14 children involved. Fathers assisted in the making of toys, bookshelves, play equipment. Aboriginals on the working Committee were Kath and Dennis Walker. The Educational Officer was Mr Watson, Brisbane Aboriginal and Islander Tribal Council.

Members have always appreciated visiting tutors from overseas or interstate, and have attended workshops in other States. The Group is represented in the Queensland Art Gallery as well as in private galleries.

During the First Fibre Conference, "Wool and Beyond", held in Melbourne during January 1981, Janet De Boer lectured on Cotton in Australia and also conducted a workshop. Jean Carman gave papers on the History of the Eucalypt Dyes and the Extension of the Eucalypt Dyes. Other members exhibited work in the "Meat Market" during the Conference.

Members have travelled extensively in Queensland

giving workshops on their particular craft. Among these members were Cecile Falvey, Betty Grulke, Erica Richardt, Rosemary Crome, Janet De Boer, Betty Franks, Bindy Bridgestock, Jean Carman, Molly Tuffley.

The demand for workshops from country members increased. In January 1971, Diana Lambourne, Donalda Rogers and Jean Carman travelled to Miles to assist in the formation of a workshop in that area. Over 100 people from Roma, Wandoan, Chinchilla and Miles districts attended the two-day demonstration of wool spinning and weaving which resulted in the formation of a sub-branch of the Group. The aim of the branch was to encourage the use of wool in its various forms in handcrafts executed in the area, and to present those for the attention of the tourist traffic in the district.

The two days were busy ones for the demonstrators and they were hampered by lack of equipment, but it was easy to improvise spindles for spinning.

It was the local dentist who became the central figure during the workshop. He decided to weave a full-size fleece rug for his floor. There was a rush on the Saturday morning to buy suitable timber and nails and to procure a hammer. Cotton yarn for the warp was among the equipment provided by the demonstrators. With much activity and assistance

for others in the group, the frame was made, the warp put on, and the weaving begun. The fleece he was using was Marino, and not really suitable, but enthusiasm was the main thing, and the rug progressed helped along by others present. Not much could be woven in the two days of the workshop and the future of the rug is clouded in mystery.

In March 1971, Diana, Jean and Doreen Dallas were invited to give a workshop at Goondiwindi. The Goondiwindi group had a small display of their own work and one of the most original pieces was a coat made with small staples of fleece sewn on an unbleached calico foundation.

Later Diana Lambourne and Rosemary Crome were to drive out to Cunnamulla, a distance of over 600 miles, to demonstrate spinning and weaving at the local Agricultural Show. Their experiences during this trip are worthy of a book on their own.

Members of the Group advanced to become teachers in T.A.F.E. Erica Richardt had been a teacher with Adult Education when the Group was formed, and many members owe their knowledge of spinning and weaving to her. Barbara Curtis, Jean Clark and Marion Standfast became tutors with T.A.F.E. Adult Education.

#### DYEING

The Group has been fortunate

in having members dedicated to the art of dyeing. In the early days, natural dyeing became the "god" of this art. Jean Carmen's work with eucalyptus went into print and received universal acclaim. Chemical dyeing began to gain recognition, and members such as Meg King, Rosemary Crome, Jocelyn Grant-Taylor, and Jill Brose became experts well able to advise others. Natural dyeing kept its following and Judith Hallett and Karlene Lewis became widely respected for their study and knowledge.

### PUBLICATIONS

A joint venture of many members was the compilation and publishing of the Group book "Seamless Knitting". Those involved in its production are named in the book.

### THE SHOPS

Throughout the years, The Group shops have played a very important part in supplying members with good quality yarns and fleece at a reasonable price. The range of yarns, (especially coloured yarns) had to be limited through lack of space, but sample cards of yarns from the interstate sources of supply were available. Members are now able to order required types of yarn directly through the shops.

The closing of some sources of supply has caused problems, especially the closure of Morris Woollen Mills.

As the membership grew, it became necessary to restrict the sale of yarn and fleece from the shops to members only. Members are required to wear the current membership badge when making purchases. On purchase of the building, it was a condition of the Brisbane City Council that no sales be made to the general public. The area is zoned Residential "A". There are signs that this restriction could be altered in the future.

It is impossible to list the names of all who have worked in the shops over the years. There is a danger in naming any specific workers, for fear others may be left out. However, the following members have contributed to the success of this area over the years:

Betty Moore, Sylvia Bannad, Bindy Bridgestock, Del Brighthouse, Judith Cheyne, Olive Kolka, Rosemary Crome, Clare Shaw, Jean Dutton, Shirley Cross, Marion Standfast, Joan Claringbould.

For the first few months after the formation of the Group, Doreen and Bob Dallas searched Brisbane for yarns, mainly cotton or linen, suitable for warping frame looms for fleece rugs and wall hangings.

Early suppliers were:

B.J. Ball; Cecile Falvey's International Studio; Pat King, Melbourne; Wonderflex; Steady Rep;



Craft Plus; Capalaba Crafts and Supplies; The Yarn Shop and The Book Shop, Montville (owned by Russ & Margaret Siddell).

Russ and Margaret Siddell are still a fount of information and advice on the subject of craft books available.

Many of the weavers who joined the Group from other weaving organisations in Brisbane bought their weaving yarns from firms in Sydney, or overseas from New Zealand, England, Sweden.

When Ans Loman conducted a weaving workshop, she brought with her samples of woollen yarns from N.Z. Morris Mills became a great source of supply for woollen yarns. As the interest in spinning and weaving cotton developed, cotton yarns were purchased from the Rocklea Cotton Mills.

In 1975, the Group Shop stocked a limited range of "Druva" yarns from Melbourne, cotton, linen, smooth and textured, single and plied, in beautiful colours. These yarns were imported from Sweden, and Rasma Druva's shop in Camberwell, Melbourne also sold Swedish looms. Some of the members bought floor looms from that firm, or imported them direct from Sweden.

#### EQUIPMENT

The Group started with no equipment of its own. A few members owned spinning

wheels. Spindles were easy to make as were frames for weaving. The experienced weavers who had joined the Group had looms of their own and sometimes brought them along to the workshops for demonstrations and tutoring. Inkle looms were easy to transport and inkle weaving, as taught by Mrs. Earnshaw, became popular. To provide members with these looms, Bob Dallas began making them.

In 1970 Jit Shannon gave the Group patterns for making 2 and 4-shaft looms, and looms were given to the Group by the Red Cross and other interested people. In 1973, Mrs C. Groom of Binna Burra presented a 4-shaft table loom to the Group. Equipment was hired out to members.

Myers began to sell Ashford Spinning wheels from New Zealand in kit form, and in 1970 Bob Dallas wrote to the firm in N.Z. asking if the Group members could buy directly from them.

This was arranged. If the money were sent in advance for wheels in kit form, the firm would send these direct to the home of the buyer. To members, the Ashford wheel sold for \$32 and those in Myers sold for \$67. Later other equipment was purchased in this way from this same source.

Local craftspersons began to make looms for weavers and frames for Navajo weaving.

The Group also began



interesting breeders of coloured sheep for suitable wool for spinning, and now a small industry of various other crafts now exists around the activities of the Group.

### LIBRARY

From the beginning of the Group, the sharing and lending of books for instruction and information have been commonplace. Soon a library began to develop as members donated books, and the governing Committee purchased books as they saw a "good buy". Over the years, this service developed. When the building was purchased, an area was able to be set aside permanently for this purpose.

Once again, volunteers have come forward over the years to see that this library is kept up to date, and members kept in touch with what is available. Once again it is difficult to name people who worked so tirelessly in the library without offending others, but credit must go to Myvanwy Emery for her knowledge and advice, not only in the organisation of the library, but of suitable books to purchase.

### A HOME OF OUR OWN

The Queensland Spinners Weavers and Dyers Group was very fortunate to have the use of the Physical Education Hall at the Kelvin Grove Teachers' Training College for their monthly meetings. Because of the

generous decision of the College administration, this was given to the Group rent free.

In March, 1976, the Group presented Dr Peter Botsman, Director of the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education with a Tade Beutlick Tapestry to show their appreciation of the use of the premises.

Because of the later change of status of the College, and the subsequent growth in student numbers, the College Hall was needed more frequently by the staff and students. Consequently, there were moments of inconvenience to the Group. Very little space was available for storing equipment, yarns and fleece.

Members began thinking of a home of their own, and a building fund was opened. This idea of a "home of our own" had been discussed earlier. In December 1971, the Editor of Clippings, Otte Molvig, wrote:

"Wouldn't it be marvellous if we were a large enough group to have permanent headquarters, where we could meet, and perhaps have a shop selling weaving and spinning materials - a gallery for our work". She had just visited the new headquarters of the Handweavers and Spinners Guild of Victoria.

Two years later, Rosemary Crome, Editor, Clippings, wrote:

"I'm sure all members will agree with the Committee as to the desirability and need for the Group to have its own premises. As our membership and range of activities increase, so does our accumulation of impediments, e.g. yarn stocks, equipment, library books. At present several of our members have the tiresome task of carrying these things backwards and forwards between workshops. It would be wonderful to have a permanent home of our own.

"This may sound like an impossible pipe dream, and members will be delighted to hear that we have made a firm step towards our goal by investing \$1,000 as the start of our "Own Home" fund. We hope to add to this as often as possible, and, as you will have guessed, all donations will be accepted with gratitude. Let's hope we will be in a position, financially, to do something definite about our plans before too long."

And so began a search for a suitable building.

In June 1980, investigations and enquiries were made regarding the Commonwealth Flour Mill in South Brisbane. The idea was that the building might not only be a home for the Group, but for other Craft Groups as well. In the end, the Brisbane City Council decided to demolish the building. The search continued.

On Saturday, November 21, 1981, a meeting was held at the Uniting Church Hall, Payne Street, Torwood.

The President, Betty Franks, reported that there would be no venue available for Group meetings after December 1981. For the last three meetings, makeshift accommodation had been chaotic and unsatisfactory. A permanent venue was of prime importance.

The Uniting Church property, both church and hall, plus 41.3 perches of land, seemed adequate for the Group's needs. It was a good investment and within the budget. The President pointed out that if the Group bought the property, it would be a permanent home and headquarters, and membership could be offered more in the way of classes and tuition, meeting times and shops, library and other services.

The building was initially inspected by Tony Franks, Jocelyn Grant-Taylor, Bindy Bridgestock and Architect Clary Aukeela. Reports from the Secretary, Bindy Bridgestock, and Treasurer, Tony Franks, covered zoning, finance from Government sources, from the Group Bank and Building Society, as well as the legal aspects of purchase were compiled. Bob Dallas estimated repairs which would be required, some urgently, some in the long term.

Before the Group could enter

into negotiations to purchase property and to apply for financial assistance it was necessary that the Group become incorporated as a Company.

A motion was submitted to the meeting:

"That the Queensland Spinners Weavers and Dyers Group should become incorporated and be known as the Queensland Spinners, Weavers and Dyers Group Limited, and shall be governed by the Articles of Association as recommended by our legal advisor."

This motion was proposed by Bindy Bridgestock, seconded by Tony Franks, and was carried unanimously by the meeting.

Certificate of Incorporation as a Public Company was issued on 21/12/81.

The following motion to purchase the Uniting Church and Hall in Payne Street, Torwood, was put to the Meeting:

"That the Queensland Spinners Weavers and Dyers Group Limited shall proceed with the purchase of the Uniting Church and Hall at Payne Street, Torwood, vendors the Uniting Church in Australia in accordance with the conditions of contract recommended by our legal advisor."

The meeting was immediately voted upon and carried unanimously by the meeting.

The cost of the Church and Hall with furniture was \$67,789.87.

Suddenly the Group had to think in terms of large sums of money for the first time. The first trip was to the Bank where they received a good hearing.

Progress of events was:

8/12/81, the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia wrote:

"...pleased to advise that a loan of \$20,000 has been approved by the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia on its usual terms and conditions."

15/12/81, solicitors for the Group, Morris, Fletcher & Cross forwarded a copy of signed contract for purchase of the Church and Hall from the Uniting Church for the sum of \$60,000.

18/12/81, the Brisbane City Council wrote saying the site was located in a Residential "A" Zone, and a formal application for town planning consent was required.

6/1/82, application for change of use of the land and existing buildings under Section 22 (1)(c) of the Brisbane Town Planning Act 1964-1980 was made.

7/1/82, the first meeting of Directors of the Queensland Spinners Weavers & Dyers Limited was held. Details were:

Present: E.C.Franks,  
J.Grant-Taylor,  
E.M.Bridgstock, A.T.Franks,  
R.Crome, L.Wieckhorst,  
L.Miles, G.Tvede, H.Shyers,  
B.Smith.

Directors:  
Elizabeth Christine  
FRANKS,  
Helen SHYERS,  
Anthony Peter FRANKS,  
Gudrun TVEDE,  
Jocelyn GRANT-TAYLOR,  
Lilian WIECKHORST,  
Eluned BRIDGSTOCK,  
Letty MILES,  
Rosemary CROME,  
Beryl SMITH,  
Jean STYLES.

CHAIRMAN: Mrs E.Franks  
SECRETARY: Mrs E. Bridgstock

18/1/82 a letter was sent to  
the Council stating the site  
could provide off-road  
parking for seven vehicles.

29/1/82, the Uniting Church  
in Australia Property Trust  
(Q) wrote through their  
solicitors:

"...completion of sale may  
be extended to 14 days after  
approval is received from  
the Brisbane City Council to  
the use of the land for your  
client's purposes, or the  
30th April 1982, whichever  
is the earlier..."

The Uniting Church was at  
all times co-operative in  
the efforts of the Group to  
acquire the property,  
agreeing to several  
extensions before settlement  
finally took place.

24/3/82, the Director of  
Cultural Activities,

Queensland State Government,  
wrote:

"...application for cultural  
capital subsidy...a problem  
in that the tenders for the  
repair work are not  
comparable, and it will be  
necessary that quotations be  
invited on the basis of a  
pre-determined list of the  
various repairs  
required...prepared by a  
professionally competent  
person...take the form of a  
detailed specification  
document, which can be used  
for the calling of  
tenders..."

"...copy to be submitted,  
together with professional  
estimate of costs before  
tenders are called..."

"...in the meantime, the  
acquisition of the property  
for \$60,000 can proceed with  
subsidy of \$30,000 being  
claimed in the normal way."

Everything was beginning to  
fall into place. The  
ownership of the property  
was almost within grasp.

AND THEN...on 2/4/82, the  
Brisbane City Council  
advised of the receipt of an  
objection to the purchase of  
the site and its use as a  
club house. The conditions  
the B.C.C. placed on the  
Group included proper  
landscaping (with plan  
submitted to the Council);  
plumbing and drainage to be  
to the satisfaction of the  
Dept. of Water Supply and  
Sewerage (such plans to be  
lodged with Dept. of Works);  
with any costs of  
alterations necessary to be



borne by the Group.

The site, which included two parcels of land, had to be amalgamated into one parcel by a qualified surveyor. The Survey Plan then had to be sealed by the Council and lodged in the office of the Registrar of Titles before the approval of the Building Application and proof of registration could be given, and before use of the building could commence.

The hard-working brand-new Board of Directors kept on the job, and by 19/4/82 the landscaping plans were sent to the City Council.

12/5/82, the Commonwealth Bank said they would release the funds to complete the purchase on receipt of the clearance from the Brisbane City Council.

The State Treasury Department agreed to release the \$30,000 grant on the day of settlement, provided they were given a few days notice, and receive a letter from the Commonwealth Bank saying that the Group's half of the money was available.

11/6/82, the appeal by the objector to the purchase of the property for use as a Club House was cleared. The Brisbane City Council agreed the purchase of the property for the proposed purpose of the Group activities. It was to be noted that fetes, exhibitions and galleries should be by permission of the Council. As the property was zoned Residential "A" there were

to be no public shops.

Throughout the whole period of negotiation, the Group members were kept fully informed of proceedings. While extensions to the settlement day were agreed to by the Uniting Church, "rent", or interest on bridging loan, was being paid on a monthly basis. Interest free loans and donations were contributed by individual members of the Group, giving the Board added confidence to proceed when things looked particularly heavy going. This was an exciting period when Group co-operation was at its highest.

22/6/82, the Group's solicitors, Morris, Fletcher & Cross wrote:

"...in exchange for bank cheques totalling the sum of \$58,443.00, the Vendor's solicitors handed to the Commonwealth Trading Bank the relevant Certificate of Title Volume 3756 Folio 23. The Bank will now attend to registration of the Transfer in favour of the Group."

On 23/6/82, notice of sale or purchase of land was signed by the Secretary, Queensland Spinners Weavers and Dyers Group Limited.

Description: Subdivisions 67 and 68 of Portion 235, Parish Enoggera, Payne Street, Torwood, Vol.3756 Folio 23, Registered Plan No. 19685.



Unimproved value of Land -  
\$18,900; Value of fixed  
improvements (church and  
hall) - \$41,100.

TOTAL SALE PRICE - \$60,000

This money was made up by:

State Gov.	\$30,000
C'wealth Bank loan	20,000
Group contribution	10,000

TOTAL \$60,000

It is to the credit of the  
collective and individual  
members of the Queensland  
Spinners Weavers & Dyers  
Group Limited that private  
interest free loans  
generously given by members,  
were all repaid within two  
years of the Group gaining  
possession of the premises,  
and the Bank Loan completed  
within five (5) years.

THE GROUP HAD FOUND A "HOME  
OF ITS OWN".

THE GROUP MATURES

The feeling on becoming  
owners of a fine set of  
buildings was one of awe and  
horror - all that money to  
be repaid!! As is usual  
when members face this type  
of problem, energy began to  
grow, and soon activities  
not previously available  
started to develop.

Repairs had to be made. The  
State Government subsidised  
the re-roofing of the Church  
and the re-stumping of the  
Hall. The painting of both  
buildings was also  
completed.

Slowly other jobs were  
tackled and completed -  
ceiling bats in Church (now  
the shops) to reduce heat;  
fans in the hall for the  
comfort of members during  
hot summer days. Re-siting  
the kitchen to give easier  
access to members for that  
precious "cuppa"; and the  
installation of the library  
where the kitchen had  
previously resided - all  
proved to be subjects which  
caused earnest discussion by  
members.

At all times, members have  
been kept informed of  
alterations to the  
buildings, and opinions  
invited.

Mid-week meetings - an  
unheard of thing in the  
"good old days" began to be  
organised. Workshops  
multiplied overnight, and a  
wide range of subjects found  
their way onto the agenda  
for members' interest. It  
became easier to draw up a  
whole program of workshops  
for a complete year.

Becoming the owners of a  
building, being a Company,  
organising events months,  
and in some cases, years  
ahead meant that a more  
businesslike approach had to  
be developed by the Group as  
a whole. A feeling that  
"the old friendly feeling"  
might be lost began to  
develop. These fear were  
soon soon swept away as the  
joy of planning began to  
take hold. Bus trips were  
planned to country centres.  
A special week-end at

Montville, in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast became a regular event on members' calendars.

An annual Open Day served to give members an opportunity to display and sell their crafts.

Exhibitions of craft have been held in outside venues - one at Ipswich in 1985, and another in Brisbane in 1987. These activities gave advanced craftspersons the opportunity to develop a more professional approach to their work.

Members play an active role in Community organised events such as Heritage Week, and Warana. A Winter School was held on three successive years, in order to probe craft subjects in more depth than can be attempted in week-end workshops.

EXPO '88, and celebrations associated with the Bicentennial year, offered members the opportunity to show their skills in public. Already busy members found they could squeeze in yet another activity during this year full of excitement.

The naming of the building as FIBRECRAFT HOUSE gave the site a new identity.

Each year has seen new ideas grow, debated vigorously, and in some altered form, reach fulfillment. In any active Group, there will never be a time when there is nothing "on the drawing

board". Forward planning with budget control became a priority. The collective creative knowledge of the Group develops annually. The determination to share this knowledge with others and to reach out to a wider public is very strong.

With a "home of their own", confidence in the capacity to make and reach targets not previously imagined grows.

The successful completion of the first twenty years is a credit to all concerned.

But where to now? The original idea in having a "home of our own" was to establish a centre where the work of the members could be sold to the public.

With a history of activity behind it, the Group is capable of surmounting what obstacles lie ahead to turn the idea of a "Gallery" into a reality.

Perhaps the next written history of the Group will record how the gallery came into being.

Who knows what lies ahead?

The naming of the building as FIBRECRAFT HOUSE gave the site a new identity. *← some time in 1983.*

CHAIRPERSONS

BOB DALLAS

JOCELYN GRANT-TAYLOR

JEAN CLARK

BETTY FRANKS

ROSEMARY CROME

BILLIE STEWART

PAULINE BALLINGER

MARY ROLPH

JOYCE HOOKER

RUTH BREMNER

MARIAN STANDFAST

NANCY LEIGHTON

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*Life members listed on last page.*

LIFE MEMBERS

Berile Falvey

<sup>1982</sup> Bob/Doreen Dallas (now deceased)

Alice Joan Jones (now deceased)

Diana Lambourne (" " )

Jean Garman (deceased 2005.

Doreen Murray

Ruth Graham 1998

Gudrun Tvede

Jocelyn Grant-Taylor

Tomy Franks

Betty Franks