



# Ebor Ruggers

[www.eborruggers.com](http://www.eborruggers.com)

October 2013

## MEETING NEWS

**5<sup>th</sup> October** From 11.30am to 3.30pm (please note the earlier start time) we will be welcoming visitors from this year's York 50+ Festival to try their hands at rag-rugging and various small Christmas-themed projects. These will include rag wreaths, baubles and cards. Members can also join in these activities of course. This will be combined with an exhibition of our work to give our visitors a taste of all the exciting things we make. So please do bring along any work, completed or not, to make a colourful and attractive display. If you would like to sell your pieces, please label and price them.

**2<sup>nd</sup> November** Working meeting.

From now on we plan to have a table at every meeting for swaps, so feel free to bring any unwanted fabric, yarn etc every month or whenever you have been weeding out your stash. You might just have the perfect bit of material that someone else has been waiting for!



One of Deborah's squares using both knitting and prodding

## September Meeting Report

We were very pleased to welcome Deborah Hastings to Ebor Ruggers in September when she came to present a workshop on the topic of "Knitting and Rugging Combined".

Deborah brought lots of her work to share with us, from waistcoats to throws and cushions, and first gave us a very interesting introduction to her work and how her ideas had developed. Then we all set to work on a small project with a square of hessian and our duvet covers and sheets. First came the cutting up of the fabric into strips - we learnt a very useful technique for achieving long strips which could be rolled into a ball.

Then out came our knitting needles and we made a 6" square which was then prodded around the edges - at a later stage more squares could be added to make a larger piece. We were all surprised to see how, once knitted up, the most garish bed linen could be transformed into an attractive fabric!

Many thanks to Deborah for a most interesting and informative workshop - it was good to learn some new techniques. Thank you too to everyone who helped with the lunch and did sterling work in the kitchen washing up and putting away.

You can see more of Deborah's work at [www.ragrugtextiles.com](http://www.ragrugtextiles.com)

"Make it up north"...is the title of a new art, design and contemporary craft event taking place at York Guildhall on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October. It will include artists' talks, demonstrations and workshops, not to mention live music and a café area. The list of participants includes several textile artists, and admission is £4. The opening hours are 10am-6pm on Saturday and 10am-4pm on Sunday.

Another upcoming textile event, but this time a little further away from home, is the fourth annual North Pennines Wool event taking place in Upper Weardale on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October from 10.30am to 4pm.

This celebration of British wool, which sounds a bit like a small-scale version of Woolfest, is advertised as being aimed at "farmers, spinners, felters, knitters, weavers and wearers of British wool".

No mention of ruggers there, but I am sure that if you should find yourself in the area that day you would find something to interest you!

Exciting news from our friend Annie Lancaster - she has moved to fresh woods and pastures new and is now settled in Elland, between Huddersfield and Halifax.

Annie has set up a great new website (look out for photos of her cute new puppy!) at [www.raggedyannie.co.uk](http://www.raggedyannie.co.uk) with a gallery of her inspiring creations and full details of all the courses she is now running. These cover a wide variety of rag-rugging and other textile arts techniques, and are aimed both at beginners and those who have more experience. Groups are kept small so that learners can receive individual attention. Some courses are held in Annie's home, and some in the gloriously-named Fabbadashery, a textile haven in Halifax.

As well as those listed on her website, Annie can also arrange for courses to be run on alternative dates and weekends, for groups of 3-4 people.

Ebor Ruggers wishes all success to Annie in her new home and enterprise.

### Rag rugs in literature....

I've just finished reading Jeanette Winterson's autobiography "Why be happy when you could be normal?" a book which is sad, funny, moving and honest all at the same time. Her childhood was spent in Accrington, in a poor area during the 1960's.

In one chapter she describes the death of "Auntie Nellie", an elderly neighbour who made soup for thirty or forty of the local children twice a week, and taught them songs and Bible stories. Auntie Nellie lived in a dank, dark house that she called "Sunshine Corner" and shared an outside loo with two other families, but had her own outside cold water tap - quite a luxury in the street. Although having to carry the water into the house and boil it up on the range wasn't much fun, especially when ice formed in the yard in winter.

This is the description of her bedroom, which contained an iron bedstead heaped with lumpy eiderdowns "the kind that were only stuffed with one duck....the small room was bare - a tiny window with newspaper tacked over it for warmth. A peg-rug on the floorboards - you make those yourself out of scraps of cotton and they have a rough-coated feel and they lie there like downcast dogs".

The 1960's doesn't seem that long ago somehow, and it is quite shocking to read of the hardship the characters in the book endured. Nowadays too we think of our rugging as an art form, and make beautiful things to adorn our comfortable homes, but this passage certainly made me think back with respect and admiration to all those who have gone before us and whose life was a constant struggle. They made their rugs out of necessity and poverty, but still managed to find love and support in their communities and create something useful out of nothing.



One of Annie's beautiful cushions

With the rise of interest in all manner of crafts in recent years, textile holidays have become increasingly popular, and there are lots on offer to tempt you both at home and abroad.

One of our members, Veronica Boden is particularly interested in going on a textile tour in India, and would like to hear from any member who has experience of this sort of holiday. Please get in touch with me and I will forward details onto Veronica.

Don't forget that Yarndale takes place in Skipton on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September at Skipton Auction Mart. This exciting new event promises to celebrate traditional and contemporary crafts using wool, cotton, linen and silk in an area which is still the home of many yarn-based businesses.

I for one am really looking forward to this - what a great excuse for a day out in delightful Skipton! We are travelling by car, but if you choose to go by train you can catch the free Routemaster bus from the station to the show.

[www.yarndale.co.uk](http://www.yarndale.co.uk)

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