

North Wales Branch Biennial Exhibition 1st/2nd November 2019

What a fantastic weekend we have just had hosting our biennial branch exhibition, which seems to get bigger and better each time. We managed to display all the exhibits entered, which was no mean feat as there were well over 300 entries this year: wall hanging and free standing. They were arranged in colour-themed bays around the lovely arched walls of the United Reformed Church in Rhos on Sea, Colwyn Bay, along with a display of Recycled Artworks, a 'One Stitch' bay where visitors could help fill in a large Colour wheel with fragments of stitched colour, a selection of work from the thriving Young Textile Group, a display of our latest Travelling Books and a fantastic array of crafty goodies on the sales table. We even had had a display model wearing a very elaborate 'Steam Punk' outfit!

Something for everyone.

Visitors could also take a seat and watch a variety of demonstrations throughout the two days on everything from needle felting to printing on fabric with lots of chances to ask questions about products and techniques.

There were refreshments on hand for those just longing for a cup of tea or for the majority of visitors who decided to stay for lunch and return to see what they had missed in the afternoon. We had so many requests for recipes of the home-made cakes available that we might very well produce a Branch Recipe Book for the next exhibition.

Sue Gallagher, a previous long-term member of the Branch, past committee member and exhibition organiser, very kindly agreed to do the judging of our three competitions and open the exhibition for us. Susanne Owen won the Anne Cross Award for Contemporary Embroidery with her free machine embroidery on silk: please see photos below.

We also have a Joyce Stubbs Award for Traditional Embroidery which went to Lynn Fox for her exquisite gold work around a small mirror: '*Oil on Water*' (please see photo below) which had taken her three years to finish.

The Recycled competition was won by Ronalda White who had embroidered a hare onto a 'boro' style denim background:

'Thread Bare Hare'. (Please see photo below)

The Young Textile Group have produced a lot of really fine work throughout this year and won several awards along the way, but of the varied selection on show at the exhibition, Ann Jones chose a small textile landscape by one of the youngest members of the group, whose work showed depth of field and lovely neat stitch. Amazing. *Landscape 2* (Please see photo below)

Copyright of all above works remains with the textile artist, maker of the piece.

We were honoured to have Terry Murphy come up to North Wales to see the exhibition and we were thrilled with the feedback we had from him.

To round off the two days, all the votes from visitors towards the Brenda Baxter 'Best in Show' piece were counted up and the very clear winner was a new Branch member who had embroidered a beautiful piece called 'Cow with Flowers'. She won a newly bought, modern and simple trophy presented by Brenda's son Neil, in her memory.

One of our 700 + visitors asked if the exhibition was touring round the country and where was it going next. I think all the members involved in making the exhibits, the craft items for the sales table and cakes, plus organising the event and setting it up and taking it all down, would be very happy to tell him that unfortunately it was a one-off and there wouldn't be another branch exhibition until 2021.

