

December 4, 2016 a Twined Sally Bag workshop was taught by Karen Sherwood, a ethnobotanist who teaches about use of native plants and traditional Northwest basketry at Earthwalk Northwest.

The goals of the workshop were to enhance skills of the participants and increase their familiarity with chosen skills and/or use of materials. Full-turn twining was the chosen skill to learn. Class ended with a survey to see if the goals were met.

Twelve students were enrolled. Some were from the Olympia Weavers Guild and others were from the local area and had some basket experience.

Class materials and instructions were well prepared.





The Sally bag is a round “Twined Root-Digging bag” of the “Wasco or Wishxam people who lived along the Colombia river near The Dalles Oregon.” (*Columbia River Basketry* by Mary Dodds Schlik - This book was recommended by the instructor)

Half-turn/reverse twining and Full-turn twining are the two techniques used to produce the design in the pattern.

The design is enclosed within two solid white twined lines. Framing the design between two solids lines was a common traditional method.

Karen’s pattern is called Pathway from Earth to Sky. It was done with a odd number of spokes so the design spirals up.

The bottom of the bag is made by grouping twined spokes first with a large set of spokes in 4 groupings and then smaller set of spokes in more groupings working all the way to one spoke per twin. This evenly distributes the spokes. The bottom will then start to cup up to start the sides of the bag.



As the design begins to take form the pattern becomes evident and the weaver can plan when to do Full-turn twining or Half-turn twining so the right color is on the outside of the bag.



Most students felt they would be able to apply the knowledge they gained in class and some were thinking what their next application would be of the techniques they learned. Finishing the basket was an initial goal. Some were up for making another basket using variations on the class pattern and others were ready for making larger bags and their own patterns



The weaver's happiness is achieved when the colors stay on the correct side of the bag and the sides are straight showing tension is correct. But sometimes the bag takes on a curvy structure and that can make a good bag too, in the eyes of the maker.

The students found the instructor very knowledgeable about the topic and she was able to explain the techniques in different ways so all understood. She was friendly, encouraging, patient and spent time with each student.

Karen showed how Indian Hemp/Dogbane (*Apocynum cannabinum* L. https://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/cs_apca.pdf) is processed. This was a traditional fiber used to make Sally bags.



Another goal of the workshop was to bring together basket weavers from around the area. All felt this was a great opportunity and enjoyed meeting other weavers. Some meet with other basket weaving groups others need opportunities to meet on weekends.



Dogbane fibers have a silk like texture.

All students gained knowledge of the traditional fibers including harvesting and preparing. Some common sites are along the ditches on Highway 2 near the orchards in Central Washington. Students learned what to look for to recognize the plant in old patches.

The Basket Study Group has completed plans to teach another workshop with a pattern by Ardith Hamilton in Summer 2017 using the remaining funds from the grant.

Class room space was found with no expense. Advertising was done with e-mail and sharing in Olympia Weavers Guild and to other local groups.

Financial Report

Income :

\$600.00 from ANWG

\$120.00 for material fees paid to instructor (@\$10 per student - meeting another goal to keep student investment low)

Expenses:

\$535.40 to instructor made up of:

- \$245.00 workshop fee
- \$204.00 materials
- \$86.40 mileage

\$20 coffee and supplies

\$44.60 Material for spokes and base used in follow on class taught by students from initial class

New students will bring have a minimal material fee and supply their own yarn to complete a basket.

Sunshine in December and these visitors to the class were a bonus to the enjoyment of the class.



Thank you ANWG!!!!

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