



COURT BARN MUSEUM PRESS RELEASE: APRIL 2010

Gandhi's spinning wheel to go on public display at Court Barn Museum

SUMMER EXHIBITION: 8 May - 27 June 2010

Spinning, weaving and dyeing in the north Cotswolds since 1900

This exhibition tells the story of a revival in the traditional techniques of spinning, weaving and dyeing through the lives of three extraordinary craftsmen who inspired generations.

On public display for the first time is a spinning wheel once owned by Mahatma Gandhi. He gave his

spinning wheel to a social centre in East London.

When war broke out the spinning wheel was taken to Laverton, Worcestershire by Mary Osborn, who began to teach local children to spin.



Alongside Mary Osborn in the exhibition we also look at Ethel Mairet who, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, pioneered the revival of hand woven textiles and vegetable dyes and the Kingsley Weavers who, in the 1920s and 30s, encouraged their workers to learn by experiment

Spinning, weaving and dyeing had almost completely died out as cottage industry by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Inventions such as the 'spinning jenny' and the 'power loom' had changed textile manufacture from a cottage craft to a major industrial force. At its height there were over 150 woollen mills in the Stroud valley.

There was a reaction against mechanisation from the 1870s, characterised by a renewed interest in traditional techniques, handwork and honest, functional design.

Also on display is a working loom, owned by Ethel Mairet and examples of her work borrowed from the Crafts Study Centre, Farnham, Surrey.



The exhibition is brought up to date with examples of work by craftsmen who are combining the traditional methods with modern techniques such as digital textile printing.

Throughout the exhibition spinning and weaving demonstrations will take place by the Gloucestershire and Stratford Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers.

A family activity pack is available and a chance to try some spinning and weaving yourself

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## CONTACTS

For information about Court Barn Museum please contact Carole Reynolds, Administrator:  
admin@courtbarn.org.uk and 01386 841951. [www.courtbarn.org.uk](http://www.courtbarn.org.uk)

**Notes to editors:**

### COURT BARN MUSEUM

#### 1. How to find us

Court Barn Museum, Church Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, GL55 6JE

#### 2. Admission charges

Adults £3.75; Concessions (students, senior citizens) £3.00; Children under 16 are free

#### 3. Opening times

April - September: Tuesday - Saturday 10.30 - 5.30, Sunday 11.30 - 5.30  
Closed Mondays (except Bank Holidays)

#### 4. About Court Barn Museum

Court Barn Museum is an independent museum and the brainchild of a group of local enthusiasts called the Guild of Handicraft Trust. The museum was created through the generous support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and monies raised by the Guild of Handicraft Trust.

This groundbreaking museum, situated in the Cotswold town of Chipping Campden, tells the story of how a small town, in a beautiful setting, became a gathering place for creative people at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and continues to attract designers and makers today. Highlights include work by C.R.Ashbee, F.L. Griggs and Katharine Adams.