

So, I've been to Fibre East twice now. The first year was great ([but I fainted](#)), the second year was great ([but rather muddy](#)). This year it was at a school instead. The British weather, being cantankerous of course, decided that it would be hot and sunny now that mud wouldn't be an issue! Last year they had a "Have a go!" tent, and I thought it'd be ideal to take some knitting machines over (I was thinking plenty of cardboard to stop the machines sinking into the mud, but needn't have worried). As we all live only about an hour away, we figured we'd set up on the Saturday morning - most folks get there the night before and camp. So we were quite surprised when we got to the school and there was no-one in sight. Turns out the sat nav had quite helpfully taken us to the first entrance, but the entrance we were supposed to have used was further along. There are two schools on the same site and they kind of join together if that makes any sense. There'd been a last minute change of location - the hall we were in had weird steps around the edge and there were safety concerns, so we got a whole classroom to ourselves. If we'd known, we could have taken more machines and exhibits, although that would also have meant taking more vehicles. Anyway, once we figured out where we should be, we had two hours to get everything set up. Pat and Wendy concentrated on getting the displays set up, and I got the machines assembled.



I took my white Gold Star cardigan, thinking I might get chilly (well, it's Britain!) so we put that on one of the mannequins (far left). The red and purple is a very

stylish evening set that Pat knitted, and the blue-green jacket is hand-spun and hand-dyed by Lynda.



This Iris Bishop shawl attracted a lot of attention. Pity we couldn't pin up a back cloth, but we ran out of tablecloths.



Looking the other way, we rigged up a display of smaller items using a sheet, a tube, some fishing line and some chairs. We had lots of natural light, and the windows were a godsend - we opened them and got a nice breeze. Before the show started, several volunteers popped in to see if we were ok, and photos were taken. Then, the doors opened and it began! It was absolutely manic all day on Saturday - we answered lots of questions about everything machine knitting. We were knitting a tuck lace scarf on the punchcard machine, and it took four or five of us to figure out why it wasn't behaving itself. Turns out we needed to read the manual - luckily I packed them! We just did plain knitting on the convertible (set for chunky) to show people that you can knit other thicknesses of yarn on knitting machines. We had plenty of hand knitters that were very surprised to see what a knitting machine could do, and showed them that certain techniques are almost impossible or very difficult to hand knit.

Sunday was a bit quieter, and I had time to watch the [sheer sheep experience](#) whilst having lunch - six or seven sheep on a "sheepwalk" and a live shearing demonstration, which was very funny. We had several children knitting on the convertible, and they were very pleased with their speedy output.

All in all, a very good day. The signage could have been a little better, because it wasn't until Sunday that I found the dance studio, and I think there was a farm shop which I didn't have time to look for. The toilets struggled under the strain at first, and the bottled water ran out quite quickly (I always take my own bottle). This was the show's first time at this venue so there were bound to be some teething problems, and of course the building is a school and is designed as such. I think it all worked out very well, and I'm looking forward to next year.