**Personal statement Lesley Mitchison**

My research activity focuses on the heritage of craft skills and their longevity within the contemporary crafts arena in the production of woven textile art pieces. Referencing archives (museum and site specific) for both visual and contextual information are key to the continued development of particular threads of investigation. A weaving career of twenty years has seen the development of many aspects in terms of technique and process, particular in the combination of weave, embroidery and print approaches to express ideas and concepts.

The development of ideas has evolved naturally through an interest in the social aspects of history, ***the make do and mend*** series of works ( Making Clothes for Children) are a comment on our society and it’s throw-away culture. Research into some second world war archiving of ‘useful ‘ materials for example paper yarns to make clothes form and food bags to make quilts to carry messages have been interpreted through weave and print.

The importance of skill based history, which has fallen out of favour with much contemporary craft criticism and the fundamental values of craft-work and its process, have been the main influences for the ***Pioneer of Modern Craft*** series of works, with particular reference to the life and works of the weaver Ethel Mairet. Her weave workshop in Ditchling Sussex, (which is now a museum) is where she employed fellow weavers, spinners and dyers to work under her guidance and tutoring in the making of quite beautiful but practical artefacts.