

Briar

Briar Noonan trained as a dressmaker at Manchester School of Art, she has set up her life and house to maximise creativity and culture.

What does creativity and culture mean to you?

Since childhood I have always been very creative. If I couldn't create, I would feel very frustrated. Culture takes me away from the everyday humdrum, it's a way of being more me, rather than a grandma, mother, or just someone that does the housework - which I'm not very keen on!

I like to play computer role playing games, it's the perfect escapism. You become the avatar when you interact with the adventure. I also game online once a week with a friend of mine in the United States.

It's a way for us to keep in touch.

How does taking part in creativity and culture impact your life?

It's a big part of my life. I belong to a number of groups, including the Cotswold Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, and a craft group where we work on our projects individually. During lockdown I joined a ukulele group online, I do that three times a week in person now.

I live alone as my husband died in 2018. During lockdown I did not go out for 14 weeks. If I did not have all these things to do, I would have gone out of my mind!



An appliqué of The Green Man



My weaving loom



"Over the Rainbow" mask

What is your most creative achievement?

Years ago, when I had children, my husband was a stage director, and I made a lot of costumes for plays. I dressed Julie Walters and Richard Griffiths. More recently, I taught a dressmaking course at the Mill Arts Centre, in Banbury. I wanted to teach in a way that left students with something they could wear at the end of the course.

What would you recommend to someone that had not done anything creative or cultural for a while?

The most important things are: don't limit yourself by saying you are too old to learn something new or you are not good enough. Creativity should be fun, you should enjoy it. It's not a competition! Join a group. There is nothing like peer encouragement and getting help!



Clockwise from bottom left:

- Patchwork jacket
- Embellished T-shirts
- Soft toys for Katherine House
- The Flash costume
- Using my spinning wheel outside my campervan!

