



CGNA is a chapter of the Embroiderers' Association of Canada.
 We meet twice a month at Edith Rankin Memorial United Church.
 Please visit our website: <http://quiltskingston.org/cgna/>

President's Message

Well, who saw that coming? The world as we know it has turned upside down and inside out! Normally by this time of year we would be showing off our results from a wonderful one-day workshop. We would be announcing the new executive for the coming year. We would be looking forward to summer stitch-ins. We would be busy finishing our projects to display at our Needle Arts Fair in the fall.

But the world is currently full of unknowns. We have not been able to meet since the beginning of March and the Covid-19 shutdown. And now, with social distancing rules, we do not know when we can physically meet again. But that does not mean we are not keeping in touch, inspiring each other, sharing tips and ideas.

We did have a great beginning in the first two-thirds of the year. Our Learn-a-stitch was well-received, and almost everyone was completing a flower each meeting, while learning a new technique. Afternoon projects were varied and fun. Our Gananoque museum exhibit was

Gilding the Needle

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absolutely amazing and, according to the museum staff, well-attended. Congratulations go out to all the organizers, teachers, and stitchers who kept us humming!

I am hoping you are all able to use this 'down time' isolation for tackling a wonderful project that has been on your stitch list, but which you never had time to start. Or trying a new pattern or stitch. Or finishing off those pesky UFO's. I know I have a kit with what feels like a thousand teeny tiny beads I would love to start.... but my cats have other ideas for it! We certainly have been admiring the completed projects which members have shared via email photos. Beautiful work!

If you are looking for stitching inspiration or a focus as we await a new 'normal', do keep thinking ahead to next year's Learn-a-Stitch program. The "Around the World" theme is wide open: So many countries with their unique stitching! Spend a little research time with your books or on the internet and see what grabs your fancy. We have so many talented members and would love to see everyone teaching and sharing.

Our guild is still sponsoring the EAC Christmas Ornament exchange in November. We had planned for three afternoon sessions in May and June to share patterns and teach techniques. Small projects like this can easily fill some of the summer days, even if it is a bit difficult to think about Christmas while the sun is shining and gardens beckon. Do plan to make an ornament or two for the exchange. Just remember the "must fit in an envelope" rule.

Though our ability to meet again is in limbo, we will still be renewing membership. I sure don't want to miss out on receiving my 'Embroidery Canada' magazine! Glenda will be contacting you in June with instructions for a mail-in renewal.

Even if the year did not end as we hoped, I thank everyone for all their contributions over the year, each of you having a part in keeping our Guild running smoothly. Only time will tell if we meet again in September, or October or later. We will keep you posted.

Enjoy your summer, stay safe and be thankful that we each have a stitching stash!!

Lorna

**CGNA Administrative
Committee
2019 – 2020**

Executive

President: Lorna
Vice-President: ????
Past President: Eva
Secretary: Leola
Treasurer: Kim

Standing Committee Chairs

Program: Ros
Communications: Donna / Beth M.
Library: Gabrielle
Hospitality: Mary Anne
Membership: Glenda
Special Events: Theresa



Guild News

Sharron Margaret Malcolm, 1949 – 2020. CGNA is sad to announce the passing of Sharron Malcolm on March 26, 2020. Sharron, an accomplished knitter, joined our guild to make new friends and to learn new styles of needlework, which included counted cross-stitch, various LAS techniques, and Mary Lou's Mandala. Her hands were always busy, sometimes in the kitchen, frequently at Francine's table. We offer our condolences to her family.

Needle Arts Fair 2020 CANCELLED. Sorry to say, this is one more thing that has been cancelled for 2020. Not having a crystal ball to see what the future holds, we thought it only fair to our vendors to cancel our fair sooner rather than later. That way they won't be hanging on in anticipation only to be cancelled at the last minute. Hopefully, we caught them before they ordered extra supplies that they would hope to sell at our fair. Considering the age of the majority of our attendees, how many of them would be willing to come to an event where there are large numbers of people (certainly more than five) in attendance? That wouldn't be fair to our vendors either. All of the vendors have been very understanding of the situation.

I would encourage you to visit our website for the list of vendors and order your supplies from businesses who support our fair. ~Theresa



Sadly, both the Lansdowne Textile Festival and the Kingston Fall Fair, two events with a CGNA presence, have also been cancelled. But, the situation changes from week to week and even from day to day. Please keep checking our website <http://quiltskingston.org/cgna/> for announcements.

CGNA Display at the Gananoque History Museum. First of all, I would like to thank all of our guild members who contributed to the display at the museum in Gananoque with your embroidery, beading, quilting, weaving and bobbin lace. A special thanks to Beth Abbott for her talk on silk. It was very well-received and those in attendance were appreciative of the depth of Beth's knowledge on the subject. Thanks also to Lianne van Leyen for her talk on Samplers. Everyone was impressed, not only with the quantity of samplers but also the breadth of Lianne's knowledge. We didn't have the opportunity to give the talk on Bobbin Lace, but I've been assured that when things get back on an even keel we will be invited to give that talk. I'd also like to thank Ros, Anjali, Donna and Lorna for putting the display together in a very professional manner.



Although our exhibit had only five weeks of exposure to the public, everyone who attended was very impressed. According to Joanne, the curator of the museum, not many people sign the guest book; however, I did note there was one lady there from Bailieboro (halfway between Port Hope and Peterborough), so she had come some distance to see our display. Joanne also mentioned different people phoned to see if the display was still there. "Yes, but we can't let you in to see it. Sorry." Word had got out that this was an exhibit to be seen. What great exposure for our Guild! Theresa

Learn-A-Stitch Teasers – Flowers

Tricia

This year's morning learn-a-stitch has been very successful at grabbing everyone's interest: different flowers, different stitches, with the Guild providing the material for each different project. Okay, so everyone may not have completed each and every one of the projects (yes, that includes me), but I know that I have enjoyed twisting and turning what I did complete into my own individual creation. I know I am not the only one – others had their own unique take on some of the projects as well.

The year started out with an appliquéd pansy with Ros as our knowledgeable instructor. The material provided was different from what I was familiar with using, and yes, I will admit, my pansy flower died before it was even planted. With all the teaching in the world, no amount of creative twisting and turning could have brought that thing to life. It was a bad start to the year, but things do pick up.



I guess I do better with roses because the Assisi Rose that Beth showed us 'pricked' my ears up, so to speak and I completed that project. I turned my red rose into a card and Nancy, who completed a beautiful rose, also made a card with hers.

Now I was on a roll and knew that whatever I made had to 'be something', not just another UFO thrown into a box. Diane's bullion knot I turned into flowers on a butterfly's wings. This is

when my creative twisting and turning showed up: HOOPS! I hooped it, using Theresa's finishing technique on the back, and I considered it a completed project. With enough hoops, I will never have another UFO, ever!

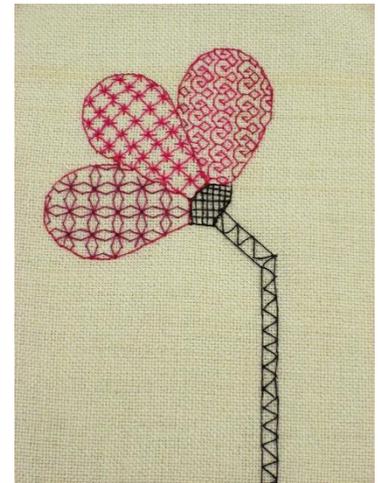


Shadow work was fascinating to a number of members, myself included. The embroidery is worked with bright colours on see-through fabric; the bright threads cover relatively large areas of the backside of the fabric and show through on the right side. The technique was especially interesting to one who had thought for years that the back

side of her mother's work **was** the right side. Another member could not stop at the smaller project and went on to



complete a larger one. As for me, I stuck with the smaller project for now. After all, you can only display so much in a six-inch hoop.



Blackwork with Beth was to have us complete a flower with up to eight petals, each petal a different blackwork pattern. Given one of my past experiences with flowers, I turned that one into a blanket and yes, you guessed it, I hooped it. Gabrielle gave up on flowers for this one as well, but added her own creative imaginary twist to create a dragonfly with delicate blackwork wings. I am anxious to know how that will be displayed. It deserves more than a wooden hoop.

And the carnation stitch with Kim -- that was another meltdown for me. I was beginning to feel guilty taking the Guild's practice materials. But the real pro is one who can turn a meltdown of a carnation into an ice cream cone. Ros added a little girl with a pretty head of hair, holding a cone topped with sprinkles on her 'carnation stitch' ice cream, and it turned out great!

I missed the Mount Mellick with Eileen, though I managed to view and admire what did get completed by others. I am still ironing silk ribbon in hopes that we can get back to regular meetings and take Sally's silk ribbon class – something I have wanted to learn since joining the guild.



And here is where the teasers come in. Merriam-Webster defines the word teaser as follows: 'one that teases; an advertising or promotional device intended to arouse interest or curiosity especially in something to follow'. I believe that we are teasers when we use our imagination to design, create and make embroideries that entice the curiosity of others. For example, you were teased when you thought someone was making a carnation, but she made an ice cream cone instead!

Some LAS Finishes



Everything's coming up **Assisi** roses!



Daphne earned a reputation for keeping up with the barrage of projects.



Congratulations to Kim, who completed all of the LAS projects and made them into a needlecase!

Silk: The Luxury Fibre

Beth M.



CGNA's exhibit at the 1000 Islands History Museum was supported by two special presentations. On February 28th, Beth A. taught an audience of CGNA members, museum staff, and attendees from the community all about silk.

Beth refers to silk as "the luxury fibre". Cultural references to the value of silk abound -- I remember the film, "Silk Stockings", and how Scarlett O'Hara, vowing never to be poor again, wanted all her garments to be made of silk (to which Rhett Butler, with raised eyebrow, asked, "All?") Invitations to the British royal weddings specified that the ladies must wear silk dresses.

Beth began her presentation by recounting the Chinese legend of the discovery of silk: A Chinese empress was drinking tea in her garden when a cocoon from a neighbouring mulberry tree fell into her cup. The heat loosened the sericin which binds the filaments into the cocoon shape and milady touched the fibres and envisaged

the potential. Silk became the currency for much of the Chinese economy, not unlike gold in modern times. The trade routes between China and the West are known as the "Silk Roads" and smuggling cocoons illegally out of China was once a crime punishable by death.

Beth brought along her hot-plate to demonstrate how fibres are still extracted from cocoons by "cooking" them in hot water. She used a toothbrush to lift some filaments out of the water and place them on a wooden reel which a volunteer assistant turned, winding a long thread of pure silk. Reeled silk is the most



Donna looks on as Gabrielle (sporting a silk vest from Beth's collection) helps Beth extract a filament to place on the reel.

valuable, but broken fragments from cocoons can be spun together into silk threads. With silk, nothing is wasted! The threads take dye nicely and can be woven into intricate tapestries. Beth brought along a mammoth collection of silk in all the stages of its production, from cocoons to garments, for us to ogle with fingers as well as eyes.

Silk is a protein – a thread of equivalent diameter is as strong as steel. Biologically, it has a prism-like structure, so that it shimmers as it reflects various wavelengths of light. It is lightweight. And, as everyone who has ever stitched on it or with it well

knows, it feels wonderfully smooth. Of course, it is also prone to wrinkling and to damage from sunlight and from human perspiration. Modern silk is used not only for textiles, but also for surgical sutures (the human body does not “reject” silk), parachute cords, and, I’m told, bicycle tires.



So, does anyone who can manufacture silk fabric on their own have a lucrative cottage industry? Absolutely not!! Beth made it abundantly clear that her purpose in working with silk is to enjoy the process -- extracting fibres from the cocoons, spinning, weaving, dyeing, and embroidery all contribute to an appreciation of what silk is. When she sat down to spin some silk, even in front of an audience, her body relaxed into the rhythm of the spinning wheel and it was clear that the feel of the silk fibres sliding through her hands was a source of pleasure. How lucky we were not only to learn so much about silk but also to witness firsthand the pleasure that it brings.



Fran’s photo of her Mount Mellick cushion demonstrates her trick for photographing embroidery that is white-on-white. Place the work at an angle to create shadows that define the stitching.



Cook's Corner

Kristeen's Fudge

Light Fudge:

4 cups brown sugar
2 tbsp. flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 cup whole milk (original called for cream; do not use 2% or lower fat milk)
4 tsp. (approximately) butter
shake of salt (optional)
1 tsp. vanilla

Mix dry ingredients. Add milk and butter. Cook in a deep heavy pan at about medium/high as this foams up and then subsides. Stir the fudge carefully but vigorously while it bubbles. When it comes close to the top (not at the top as it will continue to bubble after you take it off the heat), take the pan off the heat until it subsides (about 5-10 minutes). Put it back on the heat; it will bubble again and gradually change colour to a nice golden shade and the bubbles do not seem to burst quite as frequently.

Cook until a hard ball is formed in cold water. Add vanilla and beat until thick. To speed up the thickening stage put it in a pan of cold water for a minute or so. You should stir it a couple of time as it will continue to cook and may stick on the bottom of the pan. Remove from the water and use the electric beater on high until it thickens. (The fudge will lose most of its shine when it is thick enough.) When the fudge is not as shiny you must work very quickly to get it into the greased pan.

Pour into well-greased 9-inch metal pan and mark into squares (36 pieces).

Chocolate Fudge:

Much easier and faster to make but does not make as large a batch as the light fudge recipe. Please read the instructions for the light fudge as some of them apply to the chocolate fudge recipe also.

3 cups brown sugar
5 teaspoons cocoa
lump of butter (use approx. the same amount as for light fudge)
1/2 cup of whole milk (or cream)

Boil until it forms a soft ball in cold water. Remove from stove, add 1 teaspoon of vanilla and beat until nearly firm. Pour into 8-inch buttered (well-greased) metal pan and mark before it hardens.

Making Masks during Covid-19

Donna

In mid-March, 2020, we all found ourselves in a new world, thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic. Everyone was affected across all countries, all nationalities, all races, young and old. And very few countries were ready, including Canada. There were only so many N95 masks which would effectively keep the virus particulate at bay. This meant that even the doctors and nurses would have only a limited supply, to say nothing about the rest of the population. Normally, the N95 masks would be used once and then be tossed. But with a short supply, they needed some way to extend the life of these masks. And that is when the embroiderers, quilters, and sewers everywhere found their stash and skills being called to service. Just make a mask. We can do it!

The first mask pattern that I came across was designed by a Kingston Nurse, the AB Mask. I tried it after I spoke to a friend who had already made several herself. She told me about all the problems. If you're like me, when I sew a new pattern, I have to make all the mistakes first, before I can go into production mode. And



my first mask had many frog stitches: rip it, rip it, rip it. This pattern became popular for the tighter fit around the nose and chin. It has pleats and uses binding as ties. Darts are placed at the nose and chin. When worn, the pleats fold downwards. This was just the beginning of the patterns.

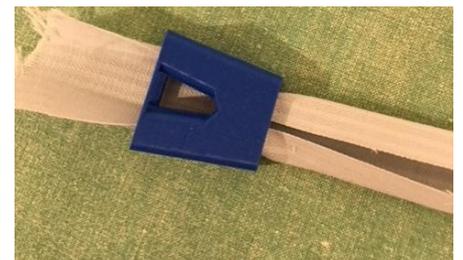
Should we use elastics instead of ties? The Turban Mask shown to the right has pleats and elastic around the ears. There was less fussing with binding and it was fast. Then we heard about "ear fatigue". What??? Yes, if you had to wear the mask all day over an N95 mask, your poor ears would tire from all the weight.



We made lots of masks with ¼" elastic and quickly found ourselves in an elastic shortage, just like the toilet paper shortage. What to do? Some creative sewers chose to use t-shirt fabric. If you cut it on the horizontal or vertical grains, the fabric would just curl around itself. However, we found out the hard way that the vertical strips were not as strong as the horizontal and often broke in half. One creative lady in our group used drapery cord for ties!



I made my own ties by folding, ironing, and stitching. I'll admit it was a slow process UNTIL ... someone made a "bias tape" tool from their 3D printer and gave one to me and several other mask makers. It was wonderful! I didn't burn my fingers anymore, and the ties were made much faster. Necessity is the mother of invention!



Then there was this mask: the Sweet Red Poppy Bias Tape Surgical Face Mask with Flexible Nose. This pattern is a simple pleated mask with a 6-inch piece of *gardening wire* inserted under the bias tape as a flexible nose piece.



Now there were debates about putting a “wiring” of some kind under the bias tape

as a flexible nose piece. The wire needed to be strong enough to go through heavy duty washing machines at hot temperatures, hopefully without rusting. Or people took them out before washing. Creativity abounded with these moldings being used: pipe cleaners, flower wire (several pieces), and any wire you could find at the Dollar Store including the wires we use to close a bag.

The pocket mask was very popular. You could fit a piece of woven non-fusible interface between the two layers to keep out more of the particles. It could be added to any of the above masks and provided even more protection.



There was another pattern that fitted much better but had a seam down the centre. It came in several sized patterns and could be made with or without the nose wire or the pocket.

Online, we had instructions and videos for how to make every mask you could think of. One lady even took the time to show that ANYONE could make a mask, as she cut her fingers and generally got into trouble as she tried to make a mask. My fav was the bra mask. Not sure how effective it would be, but there it is. And it came with elastic!



And “sew” we made lots of masks, for family, friends, and community, including the nurses. Ten members from CGNA made about 390 masks. They were collected at curbside by *Stitch by Stitch*, by *Quilt Thyme Retreat*, and by *UPS* at the Clock Tower in Kingston.



Why did we do this? Because we wanted to help our friends and neighbours. We often don’t find our skills being in demand. It’s been very satisfying to be able to do something and make a difference in this time of isolation. I believe the count across Canada is over 109,132 masks! And we have been part of that!



Hats off, to our front-line workers! May they stay safe!

Are you interested in making a mask, either to donate, or for personal protection? See www.canadasews.ca for patterns and information.

Stitching in the Time of COVID-19,

Katherine

During this time of separation and restrictions, I am sure that many of us have been busy. Stitchers, in my experience, know how to keep busy. I myself can claim that my needles have been active darning socks, making masks, sewing and embellishing a table cloth, creating a seat cushion for my husband's office chair, sewing up the seams of a sweater, and (with knitting needles) starting a top. I have been filling my time, and there suddenly seems to be a lot of it, time that was somehow used otherwise. "I suddenly have time to think," my mother says, over the phone.

And yet, in addition to feeling that I have *more* time, I also feel that *time, as I knew it, now stands still*. It is as though we have pressed "pause" on that timeline that moves from left to right, relentlessly.

Things that were considered important, integral parts of modern life, suddenly have been put on hold. These things, which have been stopped, slowed, or at least discouraged, are things now deemed "non-essential." This includes forms of travel, production, consumption. Planes have been grounded, cars parked, certain industries halted and business doors locked. Some of the effects are nothing short of miraculous (and I do not use this word lightly, acknowledging that in our present industrial capitalist system, putting a halt to such activities has enormous economic implications). Newscasters show us satellite pictures of industrial areas with blue skies for the first time in years. A researcher at Stanford University estimates that the drop in pollution levels in China's Hubei Province may in fact prevent 50,000 – 75,000 premature deaths in that area. Environmentalists predict that the reduced light, noise, movement, and pollution will be a much needed boon for living organisms and creatures of all sorts affected by urban growth and waste.

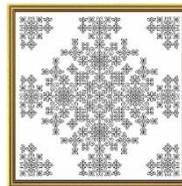
If certain things have been considered "non-essential"—itself a miraculous event, a conceptual revolution of sorts, a public validation that certain things, in a culture of overconsumption, could be considered non-essential—what, then, is essential? Food, water, housing, and protection from the elements. Human contact. An Indigenous Elder explained recently to a Queen's community that according to the Anishinaabe world view, physical contact with others is an essential part of daily life.

Essential things tend to be things that we can quantify, to measure. Do we have enough food? Is there enough water to drink? Even the Anishinaabe believe that there is a *certain amount* of daily physical contact that we need.

And so what about the other things that I find myself doing during this time? Like stitching? And planting flowers? Like staring out the window, watching the day go by? And rereading books that I like? What are these things, that are so nice and immeasurable? Essential or non-essential?

They say that one should "dance like there's no-one watching".

This is so much easier to do when one knows for sure that there is no-one watching!
Being on one's own isn't all bad.



Two of CGNA's friends were amongst the designers who offered complimentary patterns to keep us stitching during the pandemic. Thank you to Chelsea Fournier of www.chelseabuns.ca for the chart from the Blackwork Brilliance series and to Lianne van Leyen of www.facebook.com/SchoolhouseSamplers/ for the Louisa Acton Sampler chart.



In the nineteenth century, the British Arts and Crafts leader William Morris said of the many handcrafts of his day, including the needle arts, that they provided joy for the maker. Of these crafts, he spoke glowingly, as something essential to existence; crafts could be “a thing necessary to the life of man, as a token of his freedom and happiness” (Art and Socialism, 1884). Speaking in 1882, from the vantage point of rapid industrialization and urbanization, Morris felt that we were tempted to overlook the arts of handcrafting, with their slow methods and humble messages, for “in these brisk days of the world, amidst this high civilization of ours, we are too eager and busy [...]” (The Lesser Arts of Life, 1882).

For the first time, certainly since the age of Morris’s Arts and Crafts, our brisk and busy civilization has, in a sense, stopped. Modern time and its unrelenting flow, to which we are so accustomed, has stood still. When the usual world stops, what fills its space?

Several members report on how they spent the Covid stay-cation..

From Ros:

I think my butterfly is a white admiral. It was started during 2005- 2006 when we were making books of raised embroidery in Learn-A-Stitch. In February, Mary Lou Wilson taught the techniques for butterflies. I finished it in April, 2020.



The other two pictures are of a little needlefelted black and white ruffed lemur that I made for my zookeeper daughter for her birthday on May 2.



From Gabrielle:

When the lockdown came, Gabrielle’s “Noel” was stranded at her framers. One quick phone call was all that was needed to make an arrangement. The framed piece was hand-delivered to her front porch. And, what a lovely choice of frame to set off the piece! Thank you, Kingston Frameworks!!



From Fran:

The blackwork sewing machine is my interpretation of Michaela Learners Patchwork Sewing Machine. I have modified the handle connection on the machine and changed the fabric somewhat, so I could create the blackwork pattern.



From Daphne:



The Assisi coaster (left) is an example taken from my Reader's Digest book.

The Assisi with scroll is from the same book. It is intended as the corner decoration for a table napkin. There is also a peacock design meant for the side of a place mat.

From Glenda: Caught Up (Almost)

Since our Guild last gathered in early March, 2020, none of us could have imagined how profoundly our lives would change within mere weeks. It literally is a different world now and we must learn to adapt to survive a global pandemic. As "social distancing" implores us to remain at home in order to stay safe and stop the spread of Covid-19, many of us are grateful for a creative outlet to pass the time.

It may be human nature to seek the silver lining hidden behind life's greatest challenges and I think I might have found one. Home confinement has allowed me to get caught up on a number of unfinished learn-a-stitch projects including Peggy Kimble's Beginner Crewel Embroidery, Beth M's Blackwork Flower and Lorna's Stumpwork Strawberry. I have some projects remaining, and it's important that I complete them too, not only to learn the skill but also to express my appreciation to our instructors. Uncertain though the future may be, it's just a matter of time until we are able to safely gather together again. I look forward to that day!

