

Gilding the Needle

the newsletter of

The Cataraqui Guild of Needle Arts

"A few stitches today – an heirloom tomorrow"

CGNA is a chapter of the Embroiderers' Association of Canada.

Please visit our website: <http://quiltskingston.org/cqna/>

President's Message

This crazy year is finally coming to an end, a year that has turned our lives topsy-turvy. I miss seeing everyone! We know that stitching can be a great creative outlet and stress reliever, so aren't we lucky to have resources and a stash? Plus, the ability to share when the call comes out for a member in need of supplies.

While the weather was co-operating, we were able to enjoy a lovely sunny September day at Lake Ontario Park as we bid farewell to Irene Hodge. Best of luck to her as she moves back to Montreal. She has contributed so much to the Guild over the years and we will miss her. Also, for many of us, it was the first time we had been together (albeit masked and distanced) since last March! A day so much appreciated by all.

I attended a Zoom meeting for the Chapter Presidents last month. It was very interesting to hear how 26 of the other chapters are handling the pandemic and what imaginative ways they are using to keep connected. We have relied on e-mail communication up until now. It has been fairly successful with Learn-A-Stitch instructions being sent out prior to the meetings, some Show-'n'-Share and also several afternoon groups working on projects. Do look forward to

Gilding the Needle

VOLUME 19, Issue 2

December, 2020

Contents

Advertising	16
"Agnes C"	16
Covid-19 & Online Yoga	9
EAC Ornament Exchange	6
EAC Stumpwork	8
Embroidering an Altar Cloth	11
Guild News: We Met!	3
Guild News: New Member	4
New Year's Resolutions	17
Party Time	18
President's Message	1
Show & Share	12
Thoughts on First Sampler	15
Visit to X's and Oh's	5
Winter Program	17

The CGNA is not responsible for infringement of copyright by contributing authors.

**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

the addition of Zoom meetings for those of you comfortable with the technology. And not to worry, e-mail communication will continue.

A huge Thank You to the members who have presented Learn-A-Stitch instructions and history for our "Around the World" theme. To round out our year, we are in need of more people to present a stitch that they would like to share. It should be a fairly simple stitch, so no need to spend days on it. And should you be shy, email instruction is the perfect way to present without butterflies! We are all eager to keep learning.

Our Guild successfully hosted this year's EAC Ornament Exchange and our members' contributions did not disappoint. The lovely stitched ornaments were a delight to see, such a variety. I know I will cherish the one I received, and it will have a place of honour on my tree.

Enjoy the holidays and be safe. It will be very different for many of us who must distance from family, or have only a tiny bubble. But this too will pass, and I look to the future.

Lorna

Kristeen found a Canadian company, based in Vancouver, who overdye floss and perlé cotton:

<https://colourcomplements.com/> Their variegated floss is gorgeous!! The 6-strand cotton floss is sold in 10 metre skeins @ \$4.50 U.S. per skein. Also check out Lorraine's blog; currently she is exploring stitching stars in variegated threads for Xmas.

Kristeen is using colour #186 for a **Fox and Rabbit** Design. The design is exclusive to **Linen and Threads**:



"It is the twelve-part 2020 **Linen and Threads Mystery Sampler Stitch-A-Long**, "Friends and Family", which started last January. When I saw it last August, I decided it was something I would like to do. I shall enter the "family" initials for five generations (probably in different shades of turquoise) after I finish stitching the project."

Guild News: We Met! We Met!

On a bright, if chilly, September morning, CGNA met – the first physical meeting since March and doubtless the last for some time to come! In deference to local pandemic restrictions, we met outdoors (at Lake Ontario Park), we were masked, we stayed 6 feet apart



wherever possible, and Lorna kept careful track so that our numbers never exceeded 25. There was no stitching, no coffee, only a few items for Show and Share, and a “program” limited to a handful of announcements.

But, we had an important reason to gather – we met to induct Irene Hodge into our group in her new role as an honorary member. For many of us, Irene has been the spirit of guild from the moment we joined. She served in a succession of executive positions, including four years as president. More importantly, she has mentored us, as individuals and in groups. Her interest in stitching, her willingness to take on whatever job needs doing, and her gentle encouragement stand as the model of how the best guild members behave.



We presented Irene with her certificate, with flowers, and with a basket of stitched mementoes from individual members. Theresa sang a paraphrased version of “Irene, Good-Night.” Each member had a turn to speak quietly with Irene, to thank her for her contributions to guild, and to wish her well. Let’s just say that we obeyed the injunction not to hug with great difficulty.

*Irene, goodbye Irene,
Irene goodbye
Goodbye Irene, goodbye Irene
We sure are gonna miss you.*

*On Mondays, we go stitching
There’s laughter and coffee too.
But it won’t be the same, dear,
Without the sight of you.*

*Irene, goodbye Irene,
Irene goodbye
Goodbye Irene, goodbye Irene
We sure are gonna miss you.*

The restrictions on in-person meetings mean that most of us have seen very few guild members over the last three months, and Irene’s departure hasn’t really sunk in for all of us. But, she is alive and well in Montreal, and, I know, would welcome hearing from guild members at Christmas and throughout the coming months.

Guild News: New Member

Even in a pandemic, CGNA can acquire a new member!! Jo Gatenby, of X's and Oh's, doesn't really need an introduction – she has been active at CGNA events over the years, including a turn as our guest speaker in June, 2019. Here's what she's up to these days:

I have a cool 3-D design in the latest issue of *A Needle Pulling Thread*. It's called "Castle Nursery". As you can see from the pictures (*below*), the windows in the top stitching actually open so that you can view further stitching behind! There are spacers between the layers to enhance the 3D feel!



I also designed a chart with two ornaments to give to those who attended my recent open house. We had a great day, with two ladies from the Catawaqui guild making the trip, along with several from the Belleville guild! The ornaments are called **Ort Gnomes**. The red one is a hanging ornament, while the green (Christmas tree) one is made to stand on a mantle or windowsill (his bottom is weighted to keep him from tipping over). I'm not releasing the chart to shops or my distributors until next summer, since it's too close to Christmas now, but I thought I'd let the guild ladies who couldn't make it out last Saturday a chance to purchase the chart early, by clicking this link: <https://www.xs-and-ohs.com/shop/one-week-sale/ort-gnome-detail> There are some kits available for both as well, which can be purchased on the same page, if you like (ort balls NOT included). Kits and charts will easily ship as letter mail – and guild ladies always get a 10% discount. (This is the **ONLY** way to get to this ornament at the moment and it will only be available until Dec 12th – or as soon after that as I remember to remove it.)



I'm working on a couple of other projects... but that's what's finished!! I've submitted a couple of projects to EAC Seminar 2022, but haven't heard yet if I've been accepted as a teacher or not, so I'm not sure if I'm allowed to give you a sneak peek. The ladies who visited the open houses Christine and I have been hosting seemed to really like both projects, so fingers crossed!

A Visit to X's and Oh's

Glenda

Have you ever hesitated to patronize a home-based business? Perhaps you've been reluctant to enter someone's personal space, however welcomed. Or, like me, you might be troubled by a genuine fear of canines, especially big ones.

This reminds me of my first visit to one of our small suppliers, **X's and Oh's** in Tweed, Ontario. Since I have family in the area, it was more convenient (and cheaper) to pick up my order which I had prearranged with the owner, Jo Gatenby.

As we pulled up in front of her house, I remarked to my brother, "I hope they don't have a dog!" Recalling that fear stands for "false evidence appearing rreal", I knocked on Jo's front door, thereby alerting her dog that instantly announced my arrival.

My fear quickly dissolved when Jo opened the door and warmly welcomed me into her home, studio, storefront and office all rolled into one. After reviewing my order and a beautifully stitched model of the same kit I had just bought, she quickly processed the paperwork and I was on my way. I made a mental note to return when I had more time to visit and browse. Not long after, Covid-19 struck and my trips to Tweed, or anywhere else, ceased for several months.

Now that certain restrictions have eased, many of us feel safe enough to cautiously resume some of our shopping routines. I'm sure that **X's and Oh's** is more than ready to welcome us back. Jo's very recent entrepreneurial "Hop & Shop", "Fall Fair" and "Designer Christmas Open House" events showcased her designs, supplies, knowledge and skills. She is a very enthusiastic promoter of the craft of stitching. Lucky for us, I think!

Oh, and by the way, Jo's black lab, Molly, is very friendly!

Those who quilt already know about design boards. They can be adapted to embroidery.

Tricia says: I often have pieces of floss left over from projects. To cut down on waste, why not make a design board, any size? Get out however many bobbins are needed for the project, the more bobbins needed, the larger the design board needs to be. The wound floss bobbins will easily lie on the felt background. On the right is a small board I made to accommodate small projects.

When needed, cut off a desired length and use as needed, putting the extra strands beside the bobbin. If more is needed, the correct bobbin is close at hand. You could also cut desired lengths and not use the bobbins.

For further info, see Lori Holt's Youtube video entitled "Bee in My Bonnet Design Board Tutorial".



EAC Ornament Exchange

Janet

As I sit at my kitchen table writing this, the sun is shining and people are outside in shirt sleeves, raking leaves and doing other fall outdoor chores. It is hard to believe that it is mid-November and that Christmas is just around the corner. However, my Christmas cacti are blooming and I have just received the last submission for the EAC Christmas ornament exchange.

We received a total of 20 entries with the majority of them coming from Ontario and British Columbia. We had one entry each from the Edmonton Needle Arts Guild and the Alderney Needle Arts Guild in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, as well as from Virtual Threads. I am also very pleased to report that a young stitcher from the Oceanside Youth Stitchers participated in the exchange. Honorable mention must go to the Tulip Tree Needle Arts Guild, in Chatham, Ontario (which I believe is a very small group) with four entries and to our own Guild with its 10 entries. Well done, ladies!!!

All of the ornaments submitted were lovely and used a wide variety of techniques, including cross stitch, surface embroidery and blackwork. All of the names of the participants were put in a hat and randomly drawn to see where they were to send their ornament. It was certainly a privilege and an inspiration to be able to see the photographs of such lovely work.



Ornaments by CGNA members (from top left): Lorna, Beth M., Donna, Elizabeth V., Gabrielle, Glenda, Daphne (2), Leola, Kristeen

It has also been my privilege to work on this project with Elizabeth V., who acted as liaison to EAC, and with my husband, Avery, who put together the photo gallery of all of the entries on the computer to send to EAC. Not only has this whole project been an interesting experience for me, but hopefully, it has provided the participants an opportunity to connect with a stitcher from another part of our country, and perhaps to make a new friend.



Ornaments by (top right) Wendy (Alderney Needlearts Guild), (from left to right) Alice (Virtual Threads), Janel (Oceanside Youth Stitchers), Carol (Edmonton Needle Craft Guild, and Karen (Island Stitchery Guild)



Ornaments by members of Tulip Tree Needlearts Guild: Sue, Claudette, and Mary (wreath & Jack-in-the-box)

EAC Beginner Stumpwork Study Group

Ros

The group who signed on to do the EAC Beginner stumpwork project have been enjoying (or are about to enjoy) working on the piece – and it's a beautiful one. We have people at all stages, from not yet started, to just a bit done, to already finished. Sounds like a typical group! As per usual, some members had other things that needed doing – gardening (Donna - it was a beautiful fall!), house renovations (Fran and Lorna), etc. etc. So in other words, life got in the way – but, thank goodness, the project is still there waiting for them.

Glenda has admitted that she is a “one-trick pony” and is still working on her blackwork vase (another EAC project that we purchased for our group's use). However, she is collecting the materials needed and will soon be able to start.

By mid-October, Eileen had made some progress but was hoping there were more pictures to consult to see if she was on the right track. Unfortunately, I didn't have anything but she has managed very well indeed. She hasn't quite finished yet but is getting close. Look at all the bits and pieces ready to assemble!



Sally couldn't find the thread she needed for the milkweed fluff, but Susanne came to her rescue. Susanne says she is happy to have Sally pass on any extras if needed by someone else. Lorna also has threads to pass on if needed.

And then we come to Susanne - she has completed her project and is looking for more! She is turning into a stumpwork junkie! She is hoping to complete a stumpwork series with first the strawberry, then the

milkweed and then. . . . So I have sent her the EAC Intermediate Stumpwork project (poppies and chickadee) for her to print out for herself. I am happy to send it out to any others who are ready for the challenge.



I also sent her a copy of the very pretty dragonfly with blackberries and grasses project that was found in the summer 2011 EAC magazine. In 2013, several of us worked on that as an afternoon study group led by Elizabeth.

Susanne loves doing that fiddley work!



Covid-19 and Online Yoga for You

Donna

This has been a challenging year. I can't believe it is December and we've been dealing with Covid-19 for 8 ½ months! Things have changed radically – and not at all. Many of us started with mask making; we were in shock and we wanted to help. When the shock was over, or at least the realization of what we were dealing with settled in, we did what we had to do. Some of us finished a few, several, or many UFOs. Yeah!!! Some of us read those books we've been meaning to read. Some of us had the biggest gardens we have had in years (however small). Well, you get the idea!



For some unknown reason, I found myself taking different courses online (once internet problems in my neighborhood were solved). Some of these courses involved teaching yoga online; one in particular, was with a couple of ladies from California. One teacher, Lynn, was teaching yoga to 50 students, online! Like other yoga teachers, I found myself jobless in mid-March. All of this was a curiosity to me, as I had been

helping professors at Queen's teach online in my previous life. That teaching was very different – it was on academic subjects and with specialized software for online teaching. What was teaching yoga going to look like?

I found myself taking yoga classes myself to see how different teachers taught. It was a brave new world, with EVERYONE learning, even the experts. Summer came and went. I decided that it was time to jump in.



I started to teach Gentle Yoga classes online after Thanksgiving. I now have a webpage “yogaforquilters.ca” and a logo (shown to the left). There was help for small businesses from the Ontario government that I took advantage of. I was able to start teaching online with a few of my pre-Covid students, mostly quilters and embroiderers.

Why “for Quilters”? I guess I could have named it “Yoga for Crafters”. Quilters sounds better, and let's face it – if you quilt, chances are you also do some of the other crafts including embroidery, knitting, crocheting, rug hooking, bobbin lace, and even fibre art. I really am including everyone. This way, there is instant community. When you have community in a class, you're having fun with like-minded people.

We all face the same issues with our backs from leaning over too much, hips ('cause they're closely connected to our backs), shoulders, fingers, and wrists. *And we all need to relax, especially since Covid.* In fact, some of us need the tips and tricks you learn in yoga, to help us get to sleep, and/or get back to sleep when we awaken for that 4 a.m. pee.



As we age, we start to hear creaks and groans in our body. How do I know? I've heard them! But I've also found out that if I move within MY range of motion (e.g., only move my arm as high as I can without hurting), relax, and breathe, the creaking stops and I move easier; I can stitch longer, provided I take breaks and listen to my body when it says “take a break”. We all push too much when a deadline is looming, or we want to finish the row, the border, the corner, you name it. We really should listen to our bodies. And that is what the yoga I teach will show you: make you more mindful about what is going on inside and around you.

Come January, I plan to add a “Chair Yoga” class. One of the courses that I took was Chair Yoga for Seniors, taught online with teachers from Stittsville, Kingston, and Ottawa and 35 students from Kingston, Montreal, and the Ottawa area. It was a lot of fun and showed me techniques I can use for teaching anything online, and also some fun things to do in a Chair Yoga class. I also plan to add a course on Meditation, to help calm our minds. If you are interested in Chair Yoga, or Meditation, or Gentle Yoga classes, let me know. I have not set the January schedule yet, and if you have a preferred date and time, I'll see what I can do for you. I'd love to see you in my online classes – all done from the comfort of your home via Zoom.



My technology journey since Covid began has been amazing! I've met a lot of wonderful people from all over the world and discovered the power of the computer with video and audio. There are opportunities here. We just have to take the plunge! And we can do it!!

Embroidering an Altar Cloth

Linda



I was asked by a friend to embroider a gift for a relative of hers who was being ordained in a few months' time. The gift was to be a super frontal for a small altar that is in the chapel on their property. The friend had seen the super frontal that I made and donated to St. Thomas Church, Belleville.

After all the formalities were worked out – design, size, due date, payment – I accepted the challenge and started to design.

Not being a designer, I looked in a lot of books for designs. Then, realizing I needed more help, I approached designer Jo Gatenby (X's & Oh's) about creating the design. She showed

me some images online so that I could get a better feel for what I wanted. Then, I gave her my ideas and she put all the ideas together to get the first draft. After some consultation, a few changes were made and a final design was created.

But that is not the end of the story!

Stitching revealed the need for more consultation. We changed the filling stitches in the centre of the original design and widened the bands on the sides. This resulted in a lovely cohesive piece with gold touches bringing out the delicate beauty of the work.

The material was Hardanger; the threads were #8 and #12 perlé cotton and gold Kreinik #4 (very fine braid). The stitches were: cross stitch, buttonhole, klostors, woven bars, Rhodes hearts, dove's eyes and eyelets.

I was able to deliver the cloth and put it on the altar. It was a wonderful feeling to see something I made enhance the aura of the chapel.

This altar cloth was a huge undertaking, over 500 stitching hours, but it was a great way to fill the time while we were asked to stay home and stay safe. Designing and stitching it was a wonderful learning experience for me.

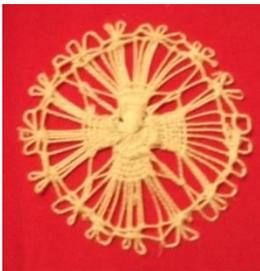


The Remote Show-and-Share, 2nd Edition

Kim: Learning some new stitches



I have enjoyed trying the “remote” Learn-A-Stitch; my Hungarian Redwork and Italian Bargello are pictured above. I have also been working on a black work in two shades. Many of the blackwork squares are from Peppermint Purple’s stitch-along. Then I started looking for ideas in the Aberoigne book from the Antique Pattern Library. I made up a few squares as well. I borrowed a blackwork book from the CGNA library and started working out borders. This has been challenging, but I think I am winning the war.



Daphne:

Watching the video with the LAS instructions for this type of lace, I thought it seemed not particularly difficult. WRONG!!! I had a hard time getting the base stitches even. At least I tried – even if the effort looks amateurish.

Nancy:

This stumpwork piece was a Monday Learn-a-Stitch project from last year. I started it in February, 2020 and finished my strawberry in September of the same year (!) I just don't like to rush in case I have to rip out.



Gabrielle:

This elegant witch’s footwear was stitched in order to salvage a small piece of material that seemed destined to stay in the “stash” setting. It’s what I stitched during October, in keeping with the Hallowe’en theme. The pattern was designed to fit a 5x7 standard frame so finishing it was simple. If I could find a pair of these, in my size – oh yes, I would wear them!

Eva: Pandemic sampler update

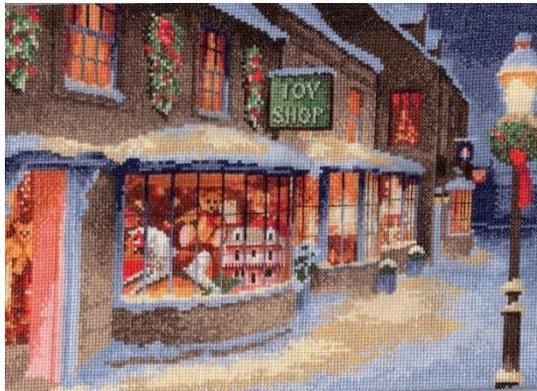
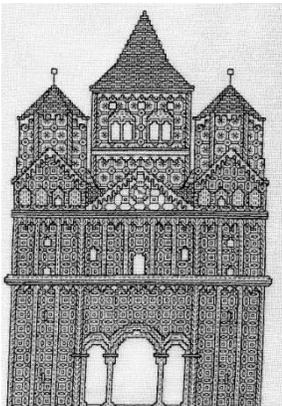
It took me awhile to get started but now I am moving along, especially on sunny days. The decision to use different colours was an unfortunate one. Deciding which ones to use when slows me down. On the other hand, it is turning out to be a great stash buster. Sometimes I even worry about running out of a particular colour. This project should get me through the winter. Happy stitching to the others working on it.



Ros:

The Ros Hanes Christmas mitt factory is still operating, albeit a bit more slowly. Here are a few of the latest efforts. I was making a fair dint in the pile of old wool sweaters, not as much in the heap of old blankets but working on it. And then my daughter went to Value Village and purchased more sweaters and gave them to me for my birthday! It's never ending!

Beth M: Three Months, Three Finishes



Whilst leafing through some old British cross-stitch magazines, I came across a lovely blackwork chart for a church. I said to myself, "Irene would like that! I should offer her the chart." Silly me -- Irene was way ahead of me. She'd already stitched it and also had the chart of the companion piece to offer to me! So, here's my Romanesque church, stitched in DMC 3371 on Antique White Lugana, with my thanks to Irene.

The **Toy Shop** was one of a series of Christmas designs by British designer, John Clayton. Kristeen was the enabler on this one. I don't often buy kits, but this one was worth the investment. Clayton's charts use a unique style of partial stitches (e.g., "squat" stitches, "straddle" stitches) which I found defined the details very effectively. Now, can I get it framed by Christmas?

"The Girl with Six Toes" (a.k.a, "Summertime" by Lanarte) might have been my oldest UFO: The price sticker on the chart reads "White Rose" and it cost a staggering \$8.47! I always loved the way it portrayed girls at that "in-between" age, just before sexuality takes over. I stitched it in a single strand of Anchor to promote the water-colour look. But, oh, the trouble it caused me! The chart was hand-drawn, and a pink 'z' represented a different thread than a black 'z'. The left-most foot looked to have an extra toe, which, of course, I lopped off. To me, the blonde's nose looked like it had been broken in a boxing match, so I re-charted the face. Over and over, I would get exasperated with this piece and put it aside, but it is finally done. And, oh dear, there is a companion piece of a red-haired woman reading that calls me...and after all, each finish entitles one to start seven new pieces.....

Tricia:



For the past couple of months I have been busy embroidering on paper and then making Christmas cards from the embroideries, some more elaborate than others. Apart from needlework, I also have had fun learning to use my new Gel Press Printing Plate. Good for the brain to tackle something new and it is so much fun! Take care all. Stay safe.



Jane: Connectivity Through Positivity

In March, when everything about COVID was new and scary and the world as we knew it was changing drastically, my daughter, Kim, called me. She asked if I might like to do a mystery cross-stitch project with her in the coming months. It came from a website in England called **Caterpillar Cross Stitch** and the kit we subscribed to was entitled "Positivity Rules" in light of the Pandemic.



Well....the thought from my beautiful and loving daughter and her way of keeping us together through the love of stitching was so meaningful, I said why not...indeed! Kim is a cross-stitch enthusiast, a happy, fun, caring woman... a bright light in my rather anal existence.

So far so good...or so I thought! When the kit arrived it was full of bright and brilliant coloured threads and a hint of what was to come through the following months: the word "grateful" with two happy little windows with flower boxes and a big heart between them. Oh my! What next indeed...

As the months passed, other words found their way onto the Aida cloth..."Laugh", "Smile", "Listen", "Patience" (patience is not a virtue I possess!) And the colours...they were so vibrant that not only did I have to wear my readers and magnifying glasses but also my sunglasses to cut back on the glare! Finally November brought the last instalment to stitch. If you will look carefully, you'll notice only one word has yet to be completed...FUN!

Alas, another call from my beloved child, "Mom they're doing a Xmas mystery design, how about it?" "**Bah Humbug!!**"

All kidding aside, this stitching project was really wonderful for Kim and me. It did help us to stay connected and close to one other. The words worked into the piece are words that help heal and that show love and caring for the people and the world we live in...they are powerful words that are so appreciated in these days of uncertainty and turmoil.

I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Hope for a Better and Healthier New Year. Miss you all...stay well... Oh, and we are really going ahead with 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' starting in January 2021...

Thoughts on my First Sampler

Beth A

I have been a stitcher on and off since I was a young child and always have enjoyed it. This was mostly surface stitching until I tried some cross-stitch after I joined this guild.

I had never done a sampler, however, although I had several books on samplers and had always wanted to try one. Some of the patterns available are large and require a big time commitment – so I had never stitched one. When Lianne Van Leyen offered us her chart of a small alphabet sampler to try, I decided that I would do it. I have always particularly liked the alphabet samplers with many versions of the alphabet and some motifs for decoration, and I was intrigued by their history. I chose some colours that seemed similar to the ones she had used in the photos and began the counting to get started. If I could count correctly, I would be a much better stitcher!!



As I worked on the sampler, I thought about the young girl, Louisa Acton, who had done the original. She was 11 years old, and although some girls did samplers even younger than Louisa, perhaps she was a farm girl or a hired girl and didn't have much time for samplers. Louisa's counting wasn't much better than mine! Her border on one side is a stitch out about 1 ½" down from the top. She worked alphabets in capitals and small letters and numbers to fourteen, as I expect that is all the fabric she had. In the lower-case letters, I cannot decide if the letter "S" is there in a different form, or whether she did two different "r's". The lower-case letters are not to scale or in the usual position with respect to the line. There are some simple border patterns and some floral motifs at the bottom of the sampler before her name. I love the simplicity of this sampler. It was obviously done as a practice piece and maybe to show a potential landowner that she could stitch well enough to embroider the linens of the household. Personally I don't think that Louisa was at a girls' school which taught stitching. Her sampler was much simpler than many of those. I like to think of her as a farm girl who had a little time in the evening or while watching a younger sibling sleeping. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could look back in time to see these young girls who produced so many of these small works of art??

Louisa liked colours and used several in this sampler, but I think her colour selection may have been limited, because I would think that if she had more, she would have used them. Girls that age would love to play with colour. Her use of colour is quite random in the alphabets. She seems to change colour after four letters in the capitals, and after only two letters in the lower-case.

I loved working this little sampler and it has inspired me to try more, although I have not started yet. I would like to design one for 2020, but that may take a while to work out. I have looked at many, many samplers online and in groups I am in, and I still like the alphabet samplers the best. Probably, that is because they had a purpose and were not just a decorative piece. And I like to muse about the youngsters that were working them, either at school, where there would be a set pattern and colour scheme planned, or at home on a farm, where the materials at hand were what was used.

I would love to hear other ideas about these and maybe I will continue to study the history and muse about the girls who left us so many pieces of their work to stitch again.

AGNES C

Tricia

Last night, I finally finished prepping my next embroidery piece. It will be Carol Arsenault's **Cherry Blossom**. I bought it from her when she gave the needle cleaner workshop and, though that seems like a very long time ago, I have always had it on my mind to do – someday "soon". I picked out my favourite cherry blossom colours in DMC floss. Okay, so I actually I have never, ever seen a cherry blossom in my life but I have seen pictures and videos. Absolutely gorgeous. I had my pinks and peaches all chosen as well as some greens for bushes and grass, blue for the river and browns for tree trunks all laid on my craft table. As well, I have needles, many, as I always seem to 'misplace' some, scissors, traced pattern and Carol's instructions. The only thing I needed now was a box or container of some sort to put everything in.

I looked hi and low, in cupboards, on shelves and under the craft table. I settled on a box that, though very narrow, held everything but the letter-sized instruction sheets. I told myself "That will do." (Those are my three favourite words in the English language and they prove that I am not a perfectionist.) I turned off the light and went to bed.



I do my best thinking in the early morning just when I am waking up and still lying in bed thinking about the day ahead. It was early this morning when I thought of the perfect container and I knew exactly where it was.... sitting in the middle of the floor in my craft room. I pass by it almost every day and have not noticed it, moved it or put it away for months – which is another thing that proves I am not a perfectionist.

It is my CGNA container, the one that faithfully carries my project of the day, the LAS scraps I learn on. It has even carried my lunch. Patiently, that container and I have waited for the next meeting. The next project. The next time! We (the container and I) did not know that the last time would be the last time for a long time. This container is big enough to carry everything I needed, including the instructions. Perhaps even a lunch if I decided to hunker down in my craft room for the entire day. So, we reconnected and in doing so, I decided to name my container 'Agnes C', the only name I could think of that contains all Guild letters.

Everyone says it is going to be a long winter. The next time seems like a long way off still. It may not even be the same as the last time, but Agnes and I will take what we can get when the next meeting is held. As for now, we will be meeting not just every second Monday but rather on a daily basis. I will pick her up, dust her off and we will finally get back together. Who would have thought we would get a new member in the middle of a Pandemic?

Take care. Stay safe. Keep stitching.



**Knowledge
& Needles**
www.knowledgeandneedles.com

**Cross Stitch Books,
Supplies & Workshops**

Ann McDonald
613-475-4843
e-mail: balych@kos.net
190 Smith St., Brighton, ON K0K 1H0

Winter Program

Our "Round the World" morning Learn-a-Stitch so far has touched on Hungarian Redwork with Lorna, Florentine (Bargello) embroidery with Theresa, Canadian Smocking with Leola, Paraguayan nanduti lace with Kim, and interlacing with Jo. All most interesting and we do have a few more fun projects to explore coming up. However, we are looking for more volunteers with suggestions to fill some of the spots in the new year. Pick any embroidery from around the world that appeals and you would like to know more about, and find a simple example that we can all try. It doesn't matter if you have never even done it before. Please get in touch with Ros with your ideas.

The following have been scheduled:

Jan. 11 (Note this is the *second* Monday of January!): Beth Abbott - Icelandic stitches

Feb. 1 : Anjali – Kantha stitch

New Year's Resolutions

Leola

Somewhere, sometime, as a late elementary aged kid, I devoured a picture book about the Chinese New Year. It contained the story of a family cleaning their whole house, paying debts, getting new clothes, apologizing and fixing relationships to honour and usher in a new beginning. This book, combined with the local Congolese custom of getting new clothes and gifts for the New Year, not Christmas, made an impression on me.

New Year's was a celebration of new personal beginnings, not a time for trite spoken or written resolutions. New school years start with new pens, pencils, and vows to study harder, be kinder, exercise, and so forth. New Year's was for physically changing your life: Actually fixing past mistakes. Starting with a clean slate.

Translated into real life, I clean the house for Christmas celebrations. I pay off all credit cards and donate to charities. I try to make sure that I am getting along with others.

But, most importantly, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are personal celebrations: New Year's Day is the time to start a new stitching project. While others bake for the holidays, I frantically stitch to finish the projects from the year before. Sometimes it takes until 10:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve. Other times "the project" gets done earlier and I fill December with Christmas ornaments "that don't have to be completed".

The adrenaline is there. After a New Year's Day breakfast of freshly baked croissants, strawberries, and coffee, the clean table beckons with the new pattern, the fabric, and the gorgeous threads.

My stitching. My new beginning.

Party Time!!!

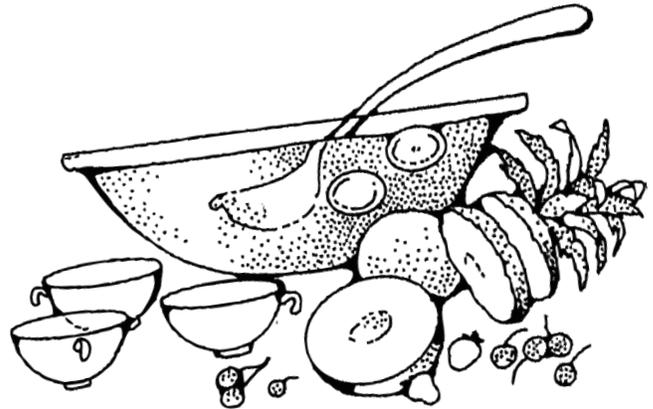
This year, we may not meet in person for our December party. But, we will still party!! Donna is the hostess who will open a Zoom meeting on Dec. 14th at noon. Watch your e-mail for your invitation. We plan to eat lunch together. Maybe we will vote on who brings the best dish!! For Zoom neophytes, there will be an opportunity to try out the technology beforehand.

TEN ways that Zoom parties are better than in-person parties:

1. You don't have to wear shoes. But, you are welcome to wear perfume.
2. We won't cancel if there is a December storm.
3. You can bring along your dog, cat, grandchild or pet rock.
4. You can turn down the volume if the discussion gets boring or somebody tries to sing.
5. Even if 20 people talk at once, the technology will only let you hear one voice.
6. You get to see your friends unmasked.
7. You can wander in and out of the party at will (like a cat at the door in bad weather)
8. You don't need to schlep bags or boxes of stuff to the meeting through the slush or snow
9. It's hard for anyone to see or count how many cookies you eat.
10. Since you won't be driving, you can be drinking.

The ingredients for CGNA punch (courtesy of Mary Anne):

- 2 2-liter bottles of ginger-ale
 - 2 2-liter bottles of cranberry juice
 - 1 large can of frozen lemonade
- (You might consider mixing up a part recipe.)



Game Time:

We always play some word games. Each of the following anagrams unscrambles to make the name of something a crafty person might make for Christmas.

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. ROMAN NET | 5. TREKS TIRE | 8. TOTAL BELCH |
| 2. PAT CAMEL | 6. TICK SONG | 9. REDIRECT GANG |
| 3. STINT ME | 7. CORTISONE AD | 10. TEN ICE CREPE |
| 4. PRANK SIGN IN | | |

Answers will be announced at 1 p.m. (and later posted on our web-page).