



# Gilding the Needle

The Newsletter of

The Cataraqui Guild of Needle Arts

*"A few stitches today – an heirloom tomorrow"*

## The Blue Heron

*Tricia*

It is our habit, hubby's and mine, to make dinner in time to sit down in front of the television and watch news and sports every evening. It's not that the news is so interesting. It is rather depressing, actually. And having to watch the sports is just a delay tactic on my part, as my better half usually then has the dishes washed, dried, and put away before I move out of my chair. What I do look forward to is Bill Hall's weather wallpaper and the interest story at the end of the broadcast, after the sports.

One evening on the weather wallpaper there was a beautiful picture of a blue heron in flight. The pictured wingspan on that bird was enormous and our large screen television seemed to diminish in comparison. That enormous wingspan, which in fact can be 6 to 7 feet wide, immediately made me think of our Guild and the wide span of projects, stitches, and knowledge our Guild covers. Our EAC Guilds span all across the country and each Guild has members of varying ages, interests, and talents. I then had a prey-driven thought (think 'dog sees squirrel') and wanted to chase the Heron idea and how it began. Off I went.

I started asking around. I called one member who suggested I call another, and that member said she would contact a previous member who also happened to be one of the founding members. It would lead to touching on the beginning of the guild. What I was interested in finding out about was just the Heron. It turns out that our logo and the birth of the Guild

We meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, at St. John's Anglican Church in Portsmouth.  
Come join us!

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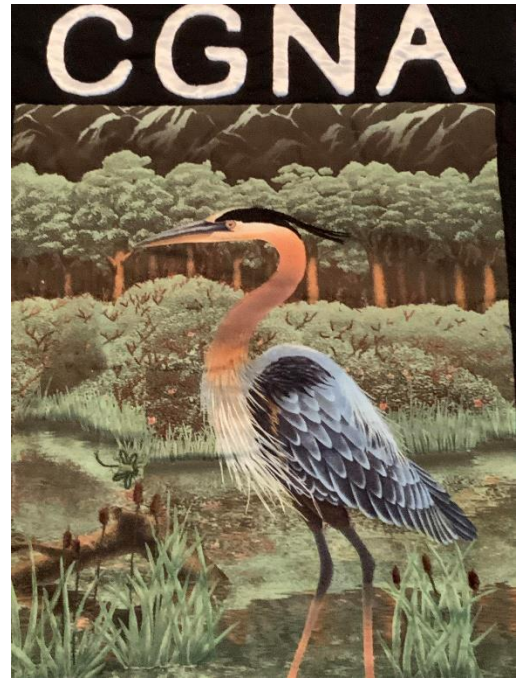
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happened basically around the same time. One person started doodling a heron. Another thought of all the nearby rivers, creeks, and lakes we have in the area. The founding members put their creative minds together and the name of our Guild, the logo, and our name tag were born.

I don't know if they thought to look up the qualities and symbolism of the Heron at that time. As for me, I was curious and checked out a book I often refer to, called 'Animal Speak, The Spiritual and Magical Powers of Creatures Great and Small', by Ted Andrews. He writes some things about the Heron that could easily be applied to our Guild and/or our members. He states that the Heron "*represents an ability to progress and evolve*". As well, "*The long thin legs of the heron reflect that you don't need great massive pillars to remain stable, but you must be able to stand on your own.*" He further states that "*those with heron totems are wonderfully successful at being the traditional 'jack of all trades'*".



That last quotation certainly is true in my case. From what I have read and learned, I believe choosing the Blue Heron was à propos back then and still holds true for us today. We progress and evolve, have remained stable, and, through our learn-a-stitch program, we can honestly say that, in needlework, we each have the opportunity to be a jack of all trades.

## President's Message

*Donna*

Another embroidery season with our friends is ending. The past few months we have been focused on hardanger, our samplers, and the galaxy focus group, as well as a few personal favourite projects. Mary Lou's visit was a highlight of our spring where she inspired us with an assortment of hardanger pieces and challenged us to "cut our pieces". I hope you are progressing with your work. Know that if you need help, all you have to do is ask.

Signs that Covid is behind us are everywhere. There was a show at the Tett Centre put on by the Kingston Fibre Artists that was well-attended and enjoyed by many of our members. The following month, Diane Reesor, a CGNA member, put on a two-week show with Dianne Lister, an art photographer friend. As you read this newsletter, you will be reminded about how wonderful these shows were.

We participated in the Lansdowne Textiles Festival which was also a success. Thank you for sharing your pieces for

### **CGNA Administrative Committee 2023 - 24**

#### **Executive**

*President:* Donna  
*Vice-President:* Anjali  
*Past President:* Diane D.  
*Secretary:* Kristeen/ Beth A.  
*Treasurer:* Lyn M.

#### **Standing Committee Chairs**

*Programme:*  
Katherine/Elizabeth/Susanne  
*Communications:* Beth M.  
*Library:* Beth M.  
*Hospitality:*  
Nancy/Janet/Francine  
*Membership:* Lynn P.  
*Special Events:* Anjali/Ellen

the day. There was a lot of interest in what we do, and many visitors took the time to hear the stories and learn about the techniques we used.

The “From Away” show at the 1000 Island History Museum in Gananoque, where we had 23 pieces displayed along with a quilt from the Heirloom Quilters, has come to an end. That show was on from October through early June. When we arrived to take down our display, we were told our pieces were enjoyed by all who saw them. The Museum was very pleased with CGNA’s contribution. Thanks to all who participated.

And now it’s time to celebrate our year and all that we learned from each other and guests. Be sure to browse our newly organized library and take home some books to explore. Watch for news of our summer get-togethers. We will also be looking forward to what Anjali and friends have been planning for next year. Denise Sokolosky will be our guest speaker after our finger food luncheon on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June. It’s time to look forward to another year of friendship and learning.

Let’s go stitch!

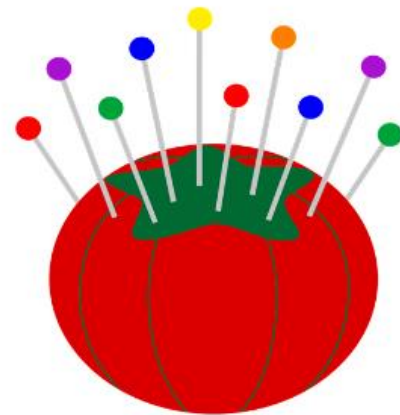
## About Pins

**In 1356**, the Guild of Pinners was established in England.

**In 1543**, Henry VIII set standards for pin production.

In lieu of expensive pins being imported from France, thorns or fine fish bones were used.

**In 1765**, eighteen different operations were needed to make a pin. With industrialization came the practice of using one man per operation. Ten men were then able to make 4,800 pins per day instead of one man making 20 pins per day – and that would have been a 12- hour work day.



## Pincushions

Pincushions stuffed with emery powder will keep pins smooth and sharp.

Pincushions stuffed with bran filling keep pins smooth.

Pincushions stuffed with sheep’s wool with lanolin will keep your pins smooth.



## Hardanger Workshop Lyn M.



Mary Lou brought along a stunning selection of Hardanger pieces—pure inspiration!

What a lovely day we had with Mary Lou Wilson. I have never done Hardanger before, so I was a bit hesitant to participate. I certainly started the day a little bit from behind as I had some trouble getting my piece to line up properly. Mary Lou was very patiently supportive, and soon I was on my way.



After doing the basic stitches it was time to CUT THE THREADS! Oh my, was that EVER scary, I clenched my teeth and went for it! Surprise: It was okay! Now on to some weaving—that I will have to practice at home.

By the end of the day I was thrilled! I am very much looking forward to the next steps and learning more intricate patterns.

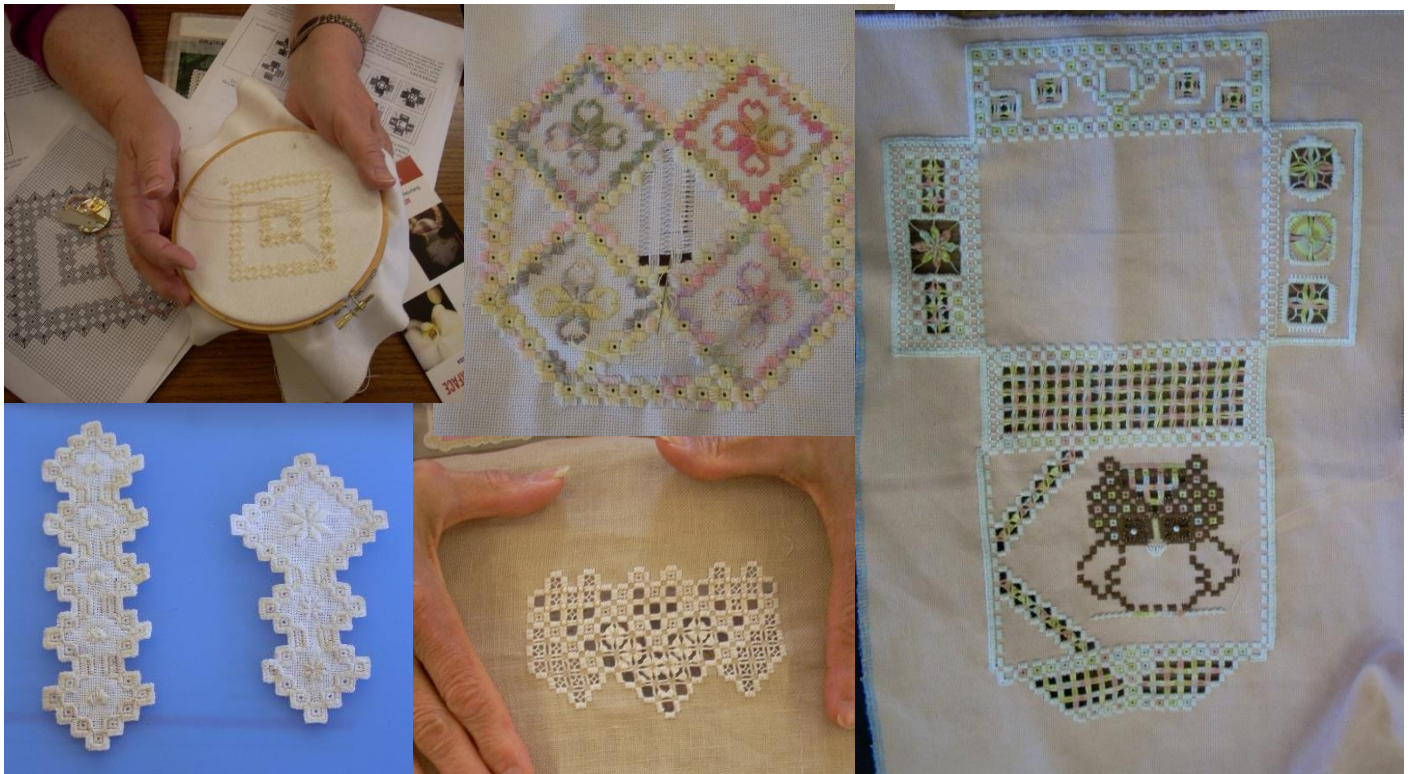
Thanks so much, Mary Lou, for a great workshop.

## Tips on Hardanger

Eileen prefers to work her Hardanger in a Q-snap, rather than a hoop. Because Hardanger patterns are characteristically rectangular, this keeps the design visible and prevents hoop marks running through the design. More importantly, it facilitates easing the tension for very brief periods, just long enough to get into a tricky part of the work, without having to remove the whole hoop and then put it back.

Lynn P.'s technique for cutting makes good sense to me. She isolates a thread to be cut – vertical or horizontal – but, instead of snipping it where it meets a Kloster block, she cuts it at its centre. She then unweaves it back to the Kloster block. She cuts each thread individually, not four at a time. To ensure that the cut is as tight as possible to the Kloster, she snips two of the four threads that meet a Kloster from the front of the work, the other two from the back.

Mary Lou's final words of advice were remarkable. Instead of insisting that we follow her instructions, she advised us to consult as many different books and videos on Hardanger as we could find. "Try out every method and see what works best for YOU, then go ahead and stitch that way." Her workshop was only the beginning of the learning process.



CGNA members vary widely in their experience and proficiency with Hardanger. *Clockwise from top left:* Lyn M.'s beginner piece, Kristeen's "Four Seasons" Hardanger, Kim's Owl Hardanger (to be finished as a box, design by Jo Gatenby), Leola's bottom band for a sampler, Diane D.'s bookmarks



## Photo Gallery

### Some Favourites from the Kingston Fibre Artists' Exhibit



Fibre Art pieces by: *Top:* Linda Coulter, Phillida Hargreaves  
*Middle:* Tiiana Kukkonen, Ruth LeBlanc, Seymone Armstrong  
*Bottom:* Bethany Garner, Lee Fisher-Goodchild, Robin Laws Field

## EAC/ACB Speaker Series

*Kristeen*



Rozashi by Margaret Kinsey

EAC/ACB's Speaker Series talk for March was by Margaret Kinsey <https://makincdesigns.com> speaking on Japanese Embroidery. After a delay due to technological problems, Margaret gave a very interesting talk on one type of Japanese embroidery called Rozashi (ro zashi - silk stitch). Rozashi is an ancient Japanese embroidery technique believed to have originated in China before going to Korea and eventually to Japan. It uses a unique stiff silk canvas with 3 or 5 threads between the holes and a unique silk thread. It seems to be similar to bargello with all straight stitching and no diagonals. It is usually a full coverage project.

Rozashi came to the US in the 1980's. Margaret is the appointed representative in North America and the only person in North America who has access to the correct threads and material. She did say that the kits and frames were very expensive in comparison to some other more popular embroidery techniques.

Margaret has taught at EAC seminars in the past and has been asked to submit a course project for possible inclusion in the next EAC/ACB seminar.



Mosi Jogakbo by Youngmin Lee

In April, Youngmin Lee gave a fascinating talk in the EAC/ACB Speaker Series on "The Art of Wrapping Cloth" with some beautiful samples of her own work. This is a type of Korean stitching called "bojagi", which roughly translates to "the wrapping of luck" or "happiness". It is a very ancient technique although there are no ancient examples of it available today. Bojagi was originally used for wrapping wedding gifts and in Buddhist rites but now is used in clothing and as an art form. There are several different types of bojagi - for the royal court, for commoners, single layer, lined, patchwork, embroidered.

In the past it was created using leftover pieces of material. There are no visible raw edges with bojagi. Some of the stitches used are running stitches, blind hem stitch, herringbone, and decorative top stitching. Typically it was done with silk gauze, silk organza or silk satin brocade but now it is also done with ramie, hemp, cotton and even more recently linen was introduced.

Youngmin Lee has written a book on bojagi scheduled to be released September 2024. She has also done some youtube videos.

Both Katherine and I wanted to learn more about the actual stitching techniques. Norma found a youtube video Bojagi Video Workshop Two - Stitching Technique Parramatta. There are also several other videos on this technique; see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9KmwN9LgFc>





The May EAC/ACB Speaker Series talk was “Wild Silk: Tasar, Muga and Eri”, by Karen Selk. Karen was supposed to give her talk last September but it had to be rescheduled. Karen and her husband started Treenway Silks in their home in B.C. In 2011, the business was sold and relocated to Colorado. Since the sale of the business, Karen has concentrated on stitching and weaving. She had a book on wild silk published last year.

Karen's talk on wild silk was another fascinating talk. India is the only place in the world producing wild silk. India is also the second largest producer of all silk world-wide. Tasar, Muga and Eri are three different types of wild silk. To be classed as wild silk, the silkworm must construct the cocoon naturally. The silkworms are moved from tree to tree in the forest to ensure they have enough food and in some cases are hung on branches on porches to develop. They must be protected from some natural enemies. The pupae cannot develop as it would spoil the cocoon. The colour of the thread is a result of their diet.

Some Trivia: Slubs in linen are in some cases parts of pupae bodies.

Treenway silk threads are from commercially raised silkworms in either China or India.

Karen's talk was the last of the EAC/ACB Speaker Series for 2023/24. Hopefully, they will start up again in September. Watch for information on the EAC/ACB website or the monthly eThreads.

**X's & Oh's**

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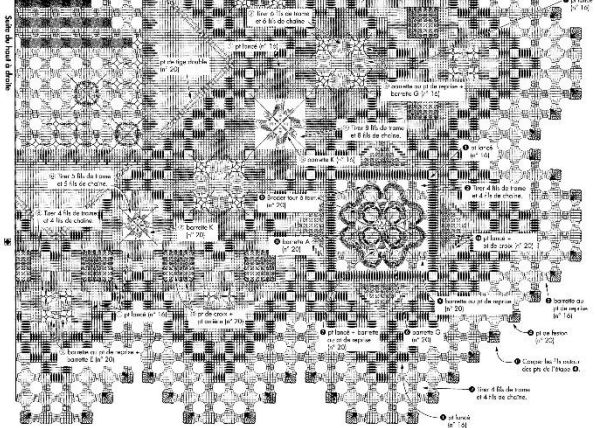
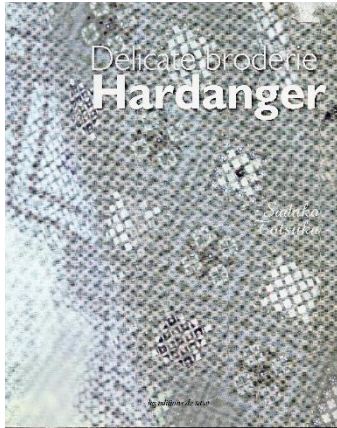
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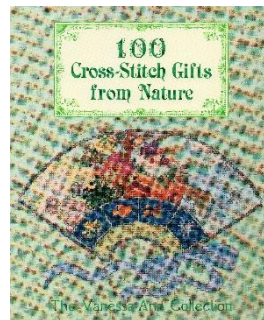
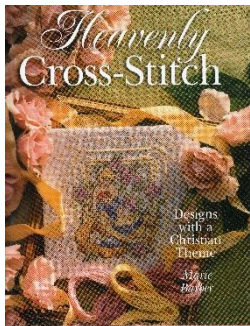


## Library: New Acquisitions

We are grateful to several members and former members of CGNA – Mary Lou, Theresa, Betty G., Diane D., Francine, Sally H., and the estate of Marg Henshaw – for donations of valuable used books. Duplicates of books already in our holdings go straight to the Heron Table, where they tend to get snapped up quickly. Marg’s daughter is still working on clearing her sewing room, and there will likely be more offerings in the fall. Meanwhile, you might want to take a peek at the following:

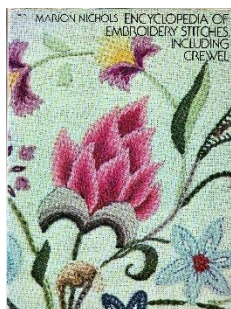


Sadako Tatsuka’s *Delicate Broderie Hardanger* is written in French, but that doesn’t mean that Lynn P. is the only one who can enjoy it. You don’t really need to read the text in order to understand and use the patterns. The designs are intricate and should appeal to those experienced in this stitching style.



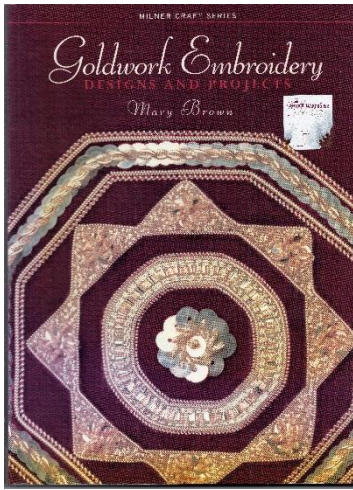
We have two new used books of cross-stitch patterns, both hard-cover. Marie Barber’s *Heavenly Cross-stitch* is full of “Designs with a Christian Theme”. Barber is a well-known designer; she published extensively in *Just Cross-Stitch* magazine and we do have another of her books (*555 Little Sayings in Cross-Stitch*) in the library. Most of the designs in the new book are full-size, although one could easily stitch small sections of the

designs for cards, bookmarks, Christmas decorations, etc. The second book is from the Vanessa-Ann Collection, another reputable source. It has primarily small designs, with lots of ideas for using them as box lids, trims on dolls’ dresses, towels, etc.



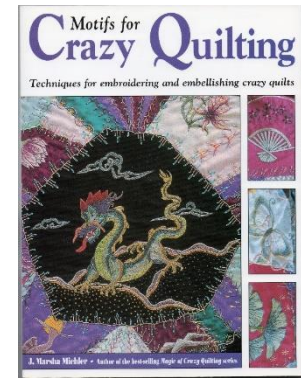
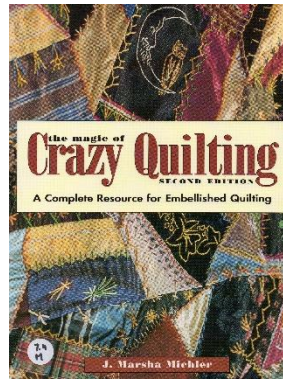
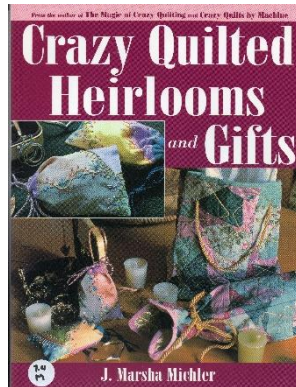
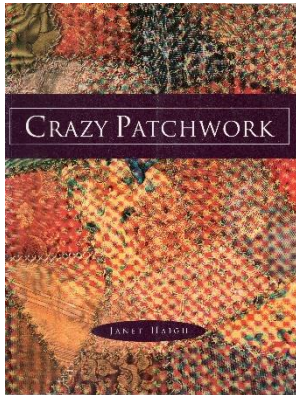
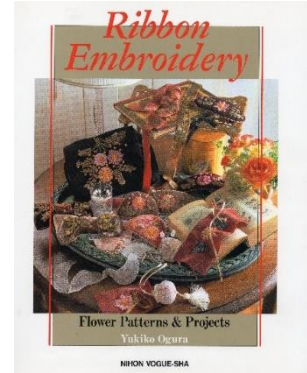
If you do not own a stitch-dictionary (or even if you do), you might find Marion Nichols’ *Encyclopedia of Embroidery Stitches, Including Crewel* to be helpful. Probably because the book was published in 1974, the diagrams are black-and-white, but both the text and the diagrams are extremely clear. (Shelved in Section 2.1 of our library.)





Mary Brown's **Goldwork Embroidery: Designs and Projects** is sure to appeal to the graduates of Lorna's course. The first 60 pages are devoted to history and description; the gorgeous colour photos on glossy paper will make any stitcher drool. There are sections on materials and techniques, then instructions for 15 projects, all fully illustrated, and each one more glorious than the last.

Yukiko Ogura's **Ribbon Embroidery: Flower Patterns & Projects** is another book with beautiful colour pictures to inspire you, although perhaps less detail on the actual stitching than would be needed by a novice stitcher.



When we started our crazy quilts last fall, there were only two books on crazy-quilting in the library. Now, thanks to four donations, we have six! Anyone still working on their quilts should find ideas here, including ideas about using crazy-quilting on household objects.



## Knowledge & Needles

[www.knowledgeandneedles.com](http://www.knowledgeandneedles.com)

**Cross Stitch Books, Supplies & Workshops**

**Ann McDonald**  
613-475-4843  
e-mail: [balych@kos.net](mailto:balych@kos.net)  
190 Smith St., Brighton, ON K0K 1H0

Ann is back with new goodies!  
**Knowledge & Needles** re-opens  
 June 8 and 9



## Show 'n' Share



Members of CGNA have brought quite an assortment of items to meetings to show to their stitching friends!

Karen's holiday trip to Italy included a visit to the island of Burano, near Venice. Burano is famous for its needle-lace, once a commercial enterprise, also a school, and currently a craft form catering heavily to tourists. Karen witnessed women sitting in doorways and shops, producing intricate lace by traditional methods. She brought back a few pieces as souvenirs and shared them with us. For more details and some amazing eye candy, do visit:



<https://theculturetrip.com/europe/italy/articles/an-introduction-to-the-lace-makers-of-burano>

Karen brought in the lap quilt (right) which was made some years ago by Mary Ann. A gorgeous example of crazy quilt hearts embedded in a quilt!



She also brought in the stitched stuffed bunny (left). It's a charming example of how embroidery can be used on purposeful objects, not just framed and hung on a wall.

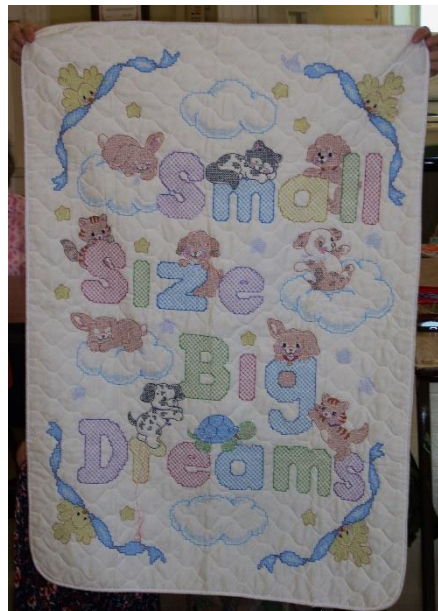


Most of our members have dabbled in arts and crafts other than embroidery. Lyn M.'s family rely on her extraordinary sewing skills. She makes the costumes for her figure-skating grandson, a complicated endeavour because they require 4-way stretch. Donna invited her to bring in some of the costumes which she produced for her opera-singing daughter. A little Mozart, maybe?

Janet has been devoting much of her crafting time to bobbin lace. She brought in her "tree" of lace ornaments for us to admire before putting it into the lacemakers' display at Lansdowne.



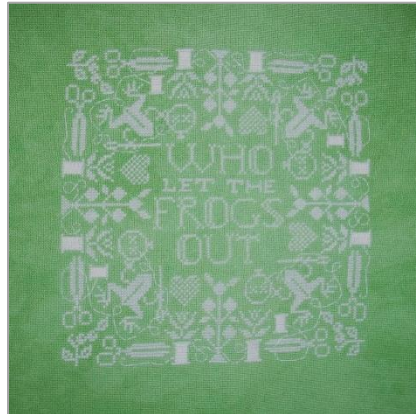
Although we promote ourselves as a "teaching" guild, our visitors and prospective members have brought in work that suggests that we may have much to learn from them. Pictured below are Kim's friend, Ensha, with her embroidery, and a baby quilt and embroidered book cover from two of our other guests.



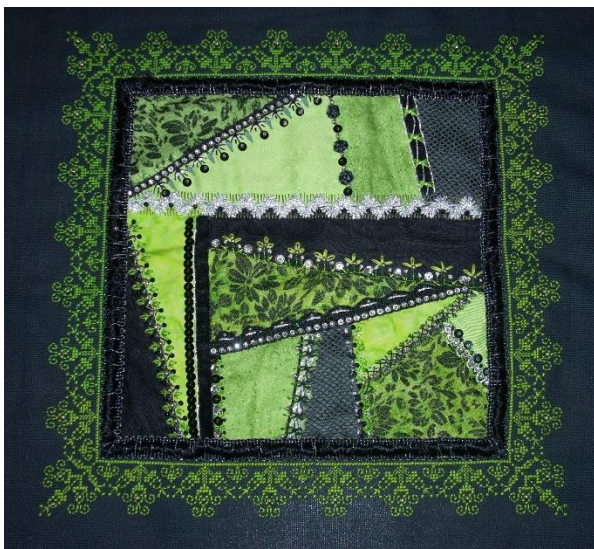




Show-'n'-Share is at its happiest when members display finished pieces that we've seen progressing over time. Diane R. has been working on her denim piece (left) ever since we've known her. It's a wonderful example of Diane's talent for crafting used – even worn-out – everyday items into something unique and appealing.



Lynn P. has now finished all four of Heartstring Samplers' cute monochrome pieces about cross-stitch. "Who Let the Frogs Out?" – stitched on green, of course – joins "Baby Got Backstitch", "WIP It Good", and "Hoop There It is". I think we know where Lynn's interests lie....



Gabrielle commented on her gorgeous green piece (left): *I did start the cross-stitched lace border some time ago (perhaps during Covid?) thinking I could feature something interesting in the middle square - - never expecting that a crazy quilt panel would become the ultimate centre. This is an original design that simply evolved during construction. I've discovered that having no pattern to follow is liberating but also leaves much to be planned and decided. Who knew that a stitcher who prefers counted-thread predictability could successfully complete a "free form" final project?*



Karen started her sampler when she joined the sampler focus group last fall. She found her "Italian Welcome Sampler" pattern at the website of **Modern Folk Embroidery** where she established a good rapport with the owner/designer. We haven't seen the piece that much at meetings....so the finished product got a huge round of applause! Congratulations, Karen, on completing this piece so beautifully.

## Adventure at the Tett

*Susanne*

You never really know what to expect from an art show. Will it draw you in, or be confusing, or even off-putting? Of course, it gives you a clue to have others describe it as "amazing" and "fabulous", so you clear your mind, ready for whatever comes.

Dianne Lister (art photographer) and Diane Reesor (textile-based mixed-media artist) are friends who courageously allowed each other to take their personal visions far beyond the original intent of the works, achieving a creative interface and a new body of creations (paraphrased from artists' statement).

This statement, written on the wall at the entrance, became a guide, as well as Diane herself, a special treat for us, being the first visitors of the day. The works were hung in a way that drew one in, uncluttered, well-lit, immediately making one curious to get closer to where a silly bird, sporting an outrageously large beak - one of its stockings sliding down its leg - showed us vanity and the desire to be someone else by wearing a 'mask'. The foolishness made me smile with



affection. A large wall piece of black fabric, pre-printed with white concentric interlocking circles was decorated with tiny coloured beads so that, in looking closer, the circles seemed to move. The other, smaller wall piece has been seen by some of us at Guild, stitched with silk cocoons, a fragment of wedding dress, and fabric given to Diane by a ninety-four year old friend. This homage to the past was echoed in a loosely crocheted cloth fashioned out of parcel string, meticulously saved and repurposed by her grandmother. Resting on it was a small basket containing threads and ribbons and a mask made by Diane's young daughter, all to come together as a whole, some time.



Repurposing was also evident in a wall piece of delicate, layered fabric, mounted on an old window frame, rough wood, peeling paint, and all. A large screen made of wood and men's ties, whose colours were carefully arranged to bring out certain hues (bottom, Page 16), brought back memories and brought tears to the eyes of some.







The human figure "Sorrow" was astonishing. It was entirely made out of layered discs cut out of plastic lettuce containers, red telephone wires, and tiny beads for hands. This figure, approximately ten inches in sitting position, head bent, knees slightly drawn up, arms limply

forward was photographed by Dianne, gently spotlighted and faintly glowing pink—it evoked pity. A black and white photo echoed the starkness and fragmentation which intense sorrow brings. To me, this was the first example of "the call and response to each other's art".

A series of fabric faces, each subtly different but none really showing a particular emotion was mounted vertically in a narrow box. Then we came to a seated, embroidered spirit doll cradling her child. Her hair was wild but she had no face. All her emotions were spread around her as small fabric masks depicting everything from joy to intense anger. By holding the different masks to her face I experienced the impact of facial expressions - and this from a doll. Diane L had photographed and enlarged some of these masks which gave them a reality all their own, almost life-like and mounted them in a similar vertical box. A large photo of the spirit doll from behind, the same wild hair but a straight back gave an appearance of strength, so different from the maternal tenderness of the front of the doll. Truly, the magic of perspective.

Down at knee level hung a small photo taken from a standing position of crossed fence posts and a myriad of coloured Fall leaves on the ground. Almost a visual secret. Diane R had changed this perspective to a front-on, large fabric work on white of coloured leaves with holes and munching insects. Both artists clearly share a sense of time in all its facets.

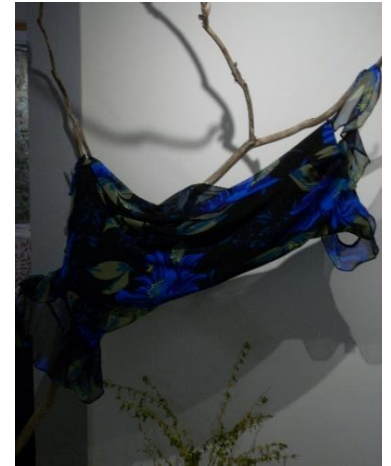
Sand with all its texture and subtle colours, evidence of past rivulets flowing diagonally down the picture was beautifully photographed and clearly touched Diane R. Her fabric work faithfully echoed the photograph, bringing out both colour and texture, achieving the same feeling which made me want to touch the two images.

We are surrounded by colour and the contrast of a black and white photograph of leaf stalks seen from below against the sky had a strong impact on me. Beside it hung a serene picture in various shades of blue mountains, blue waters, almost pink shore under a pale sky and its wisp of pink. Dianne L explained that the view was totally real, the only colour added was the wisp. A weaver's dream.





On an easel stood a large photograph in white from which I had to puzzle out the amazing driftwood image in whose centre was draped a brilliant blue dress. This blue dress embodies the continuity in Dianne L's life as she travels the world. We find it again escaping out of the window of a derelict crofter cottage and see it again in reality reclining on a large piece of driftwood at the gallery entrance.



On the central wall of the gallery, under perfect lighting were suspended jelly fish in pastel yellow and blue with long, flowing tentacles, and on the wall photos in deep blue with brilliant red jellyfish shooting off here and there, in sharp contrast to the gentle, suspended creatures. A wavy pale shiny green fabric evoked the water. Wow! Another stunning collaboration, each with its own vision creating a new work.

On the other side of the wall, Dianne L had mounted her large picture of the aforementioned crofter cottage, solid, permanent, yet long ago abandoned in the Outer Hebrides. Diane R had enlarged an area in the upper corner of the house where the mortar was crumbling, creating a blow-up and bringing out the texture in fabric. The close-up of dried grass outside of a window whose tattered curtain hung lifeless, inspired Diane to realize it with real grass trapped behind gossamer fabric that might have come from the window's curtain.

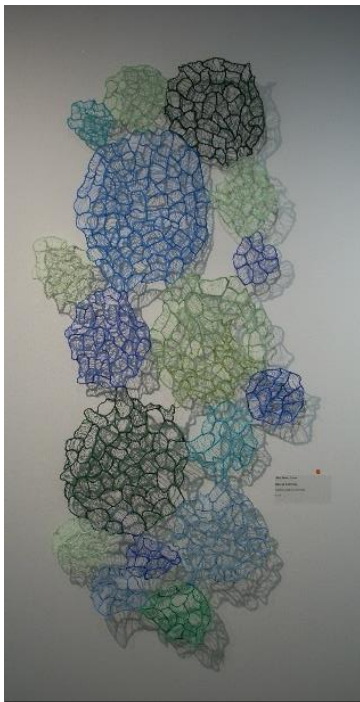
The final work was a visual poem in memory of Diane R's father. A collage of photographs, chess pieces, pictures of camping became a treasure hunt, rewarded by finding tiny, scary masks hidden among tree roots, echoes of the scary stories he loved to tell the kids. This work brought us to "Sentimental Cloth" where Diane creates bespoke items out of memorabilia like artifacts, fabrics, stories that can become spirit dolls or memory bears or visual poems. She is a fountain of creativity.

For me, the promise of "... a completely new body of creations" inspired by their trust in each other's artistic soul was completely fulfilled. This show has enriched my life and the memory will live and inspire me.



"Amazing" and "Fabulous" indeed! Thank you Both.





One of Denise's pieces from the show at the Tett Centre last April

## June AGM and Year-End Party

In the morning, we meet for our Annual General Meeting. Have a look at the committee reports and prepare your questions and comments! Note that Lyn will not be present, so the Treasurer's report won't be discussed. The Town Hall meeting is an opportunity to air concerns and offer new ideas. Anjali will be presenting the current plans for next year's program. We must also ensure that positions on the administrative committee are all filled.

Hospitality has defined our potluck lunch as "finger foods". Please bring something to share that does not require heating up, as the kitchen will be basically off-limits. Think picnic – or cocktail party. Please bring your own plate, mug and napkin.

Our afternoon speaker will be Denise Sokolsky. Denise is a member of the Kingston Fibre Artists group. One of her specialties is the use of machine embroidery, and she will be demonstrating this in her presentation.

### The Last Word

Is your sewing or crafting space cluttered?  
Do you wish it were less cluttered?  
**Should** you wish it were less cluttered?

Despite the current popularity of de-cluttering, research indicates that people who work in cluttered spaces are not actually terrible people – they tend to be intelligent, creative, and open-minded. Einstein was notorious for having a cluttered desk; famously, he quipped, "If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what, then, is an empty desk a sign?"

It seems to me that for each of us there is a unique "sweet spot", somewhere between clutter so extreme that one cannot find the things one needs when one needs them and orderliness so sanitized that one cannot do anything for fear of disrupting it. My admiration goes neither to free spirits nor to neatniks, but rather to those happy individuals who have found their personal sweet spot and occupy it without apology.