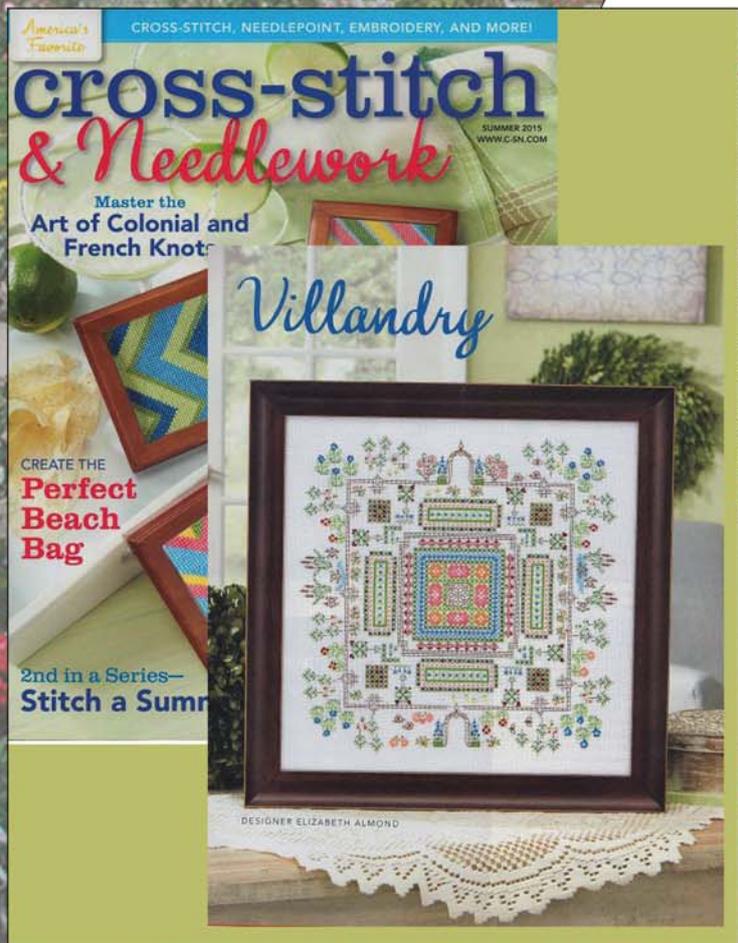




# Blackwork Journey Blog

June 2015

*Block 4 Box of Delights*  
*New Designs - Shooting Star &  
Butterly Kiss*  
**Readers contributions**  
**What needlework means!**



## Blackwork Journey Blog – June 2015

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May was an interesting month for me with the Facebook group growing steadily to nearly 400, two magazine articles and charts published an interesting commission and a lot of queries from readers. I am also giving a talk later in the month entitled ‘Keep on Stitching’ which led me to do some serious thinking about what needlework means, not just to me, but to many of the readers with whom I am in regular contact and after much thought, I summed it up as follows:-

*“Needlework is for everyone to enjoy with no limitations. It crosses boundaries, countries and religion, without fear or favour. It reaches out to people who are isolated for whatever reason and brings people together through the joy of sharing. It does not matter how old or young people are or how experienced, it is there for you to take what you need and to share what you enjoy. I hope my designs, including ‘Save the Stitches’ and ‘Box of Delights’ do just that and I look forward continuing to share my love of needlework with you all.”*

A number of readers replied to these comments on Facebook and without exception, they all felt that embroidery added an extra dimension to their lives. Not everyone in a family will understand the value of what they do and some may dismiss it, but the benefits have been documented recently in a study by researchers at the Mayo Clinic who looked at the benefits of a number of activities in middle and old age and found that by engaging in a creative hobby like painting, quilting, pottery or woodwork, helped to keep the brain sharp, reduce the risk of dementia and preserve people’s memories.

In addition to arts and crafts, the study published in the journal ‘Neurology’ also examined the long term benefits of social activities such as book clubs, movies, concerts, time with friends and travel. Additionally, the study considered the brain-health benefits of computer pastimes such as surfing the Internet, playing video games and even online shopping!

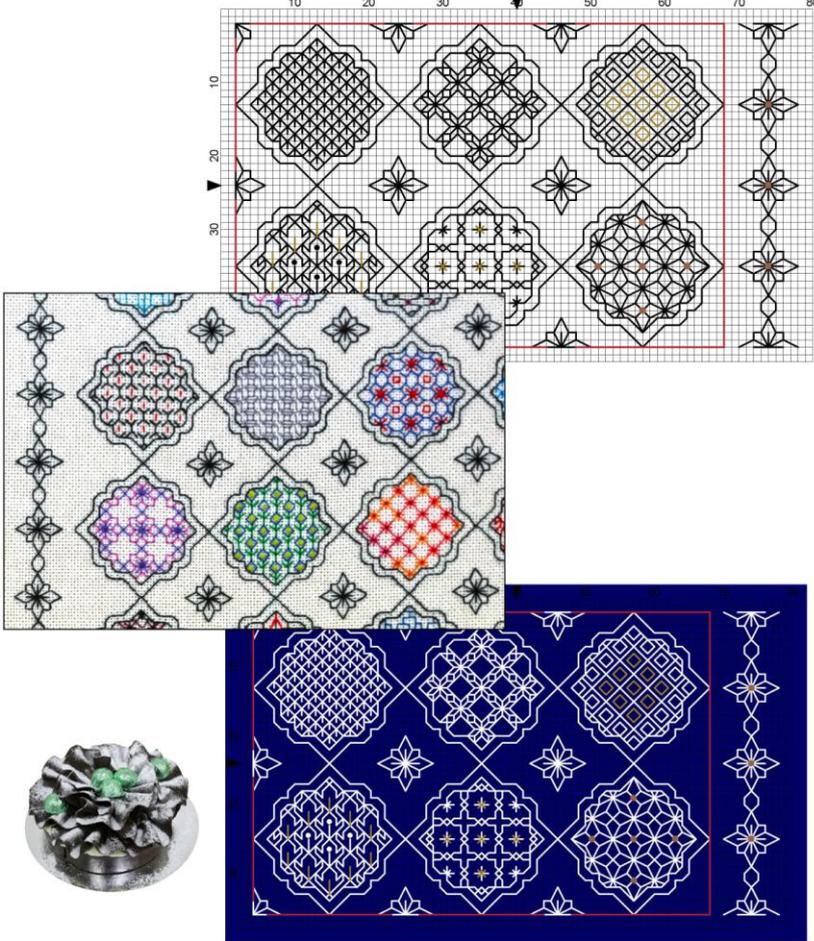
All of these helped, but artistic pursuits seemed to be the most effective, so when people ask why we stitch and what benefits are gained from it, we can genuinely reply that it keeps us young!

*Using the right tools can make life much easier, so take a look in my ‘Techniques’ section for information about equipment, frames, lights and lenses.*



*The fourth instalment of 'Box of Delights' Block 4*

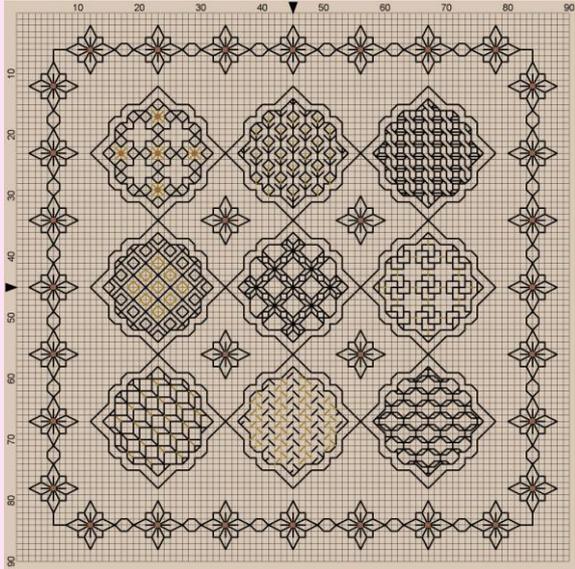
**BOX OF DELIGHTS**  
Blackwork Journey - Designs by Elizabeth Almond  
Block 4 Patterns 19- 24



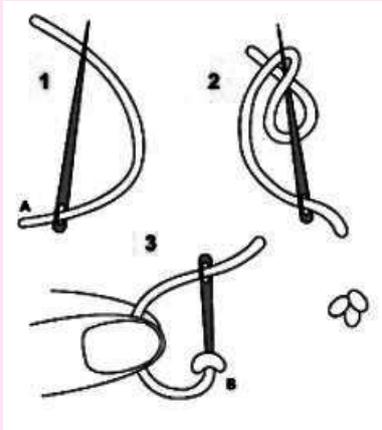
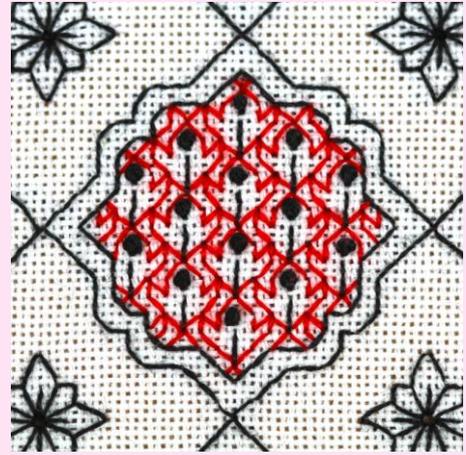
*Needlecase stitched by Julie using one sweet motif*



**'Yes, I could give up chocolate, but I'm not a quitter.'**

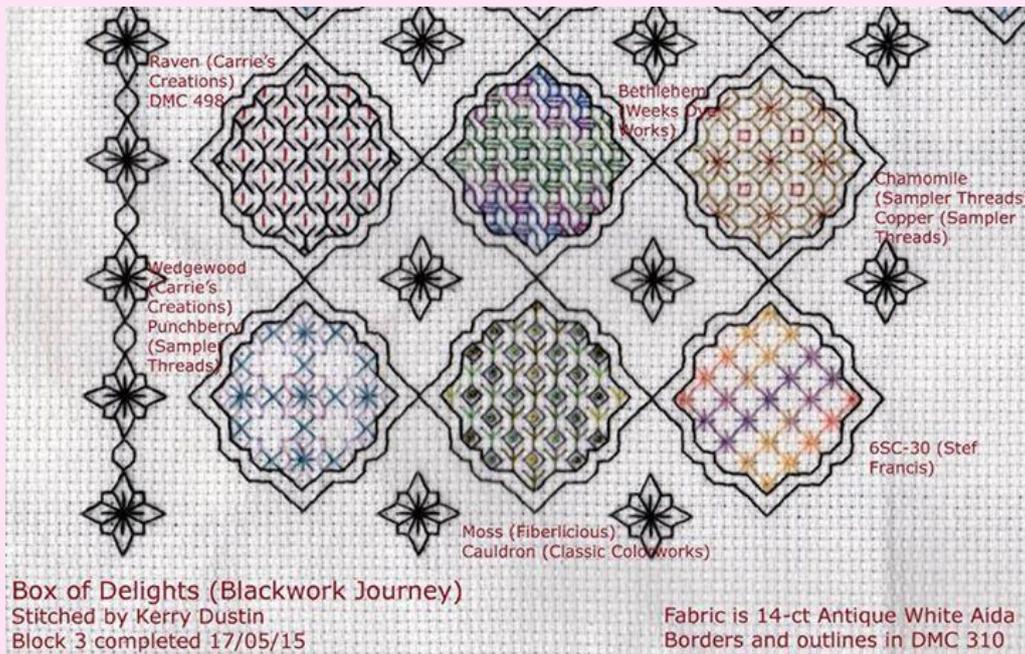


*Choosing the nine sweet frame from the Introduction, add your own choice of fillers and create another variation!*



*Use colonial knots rather than beads for the coloured embroidery to create a perfect knot every time.*

*Wrap the thread round the needle to create a figure of eight.*

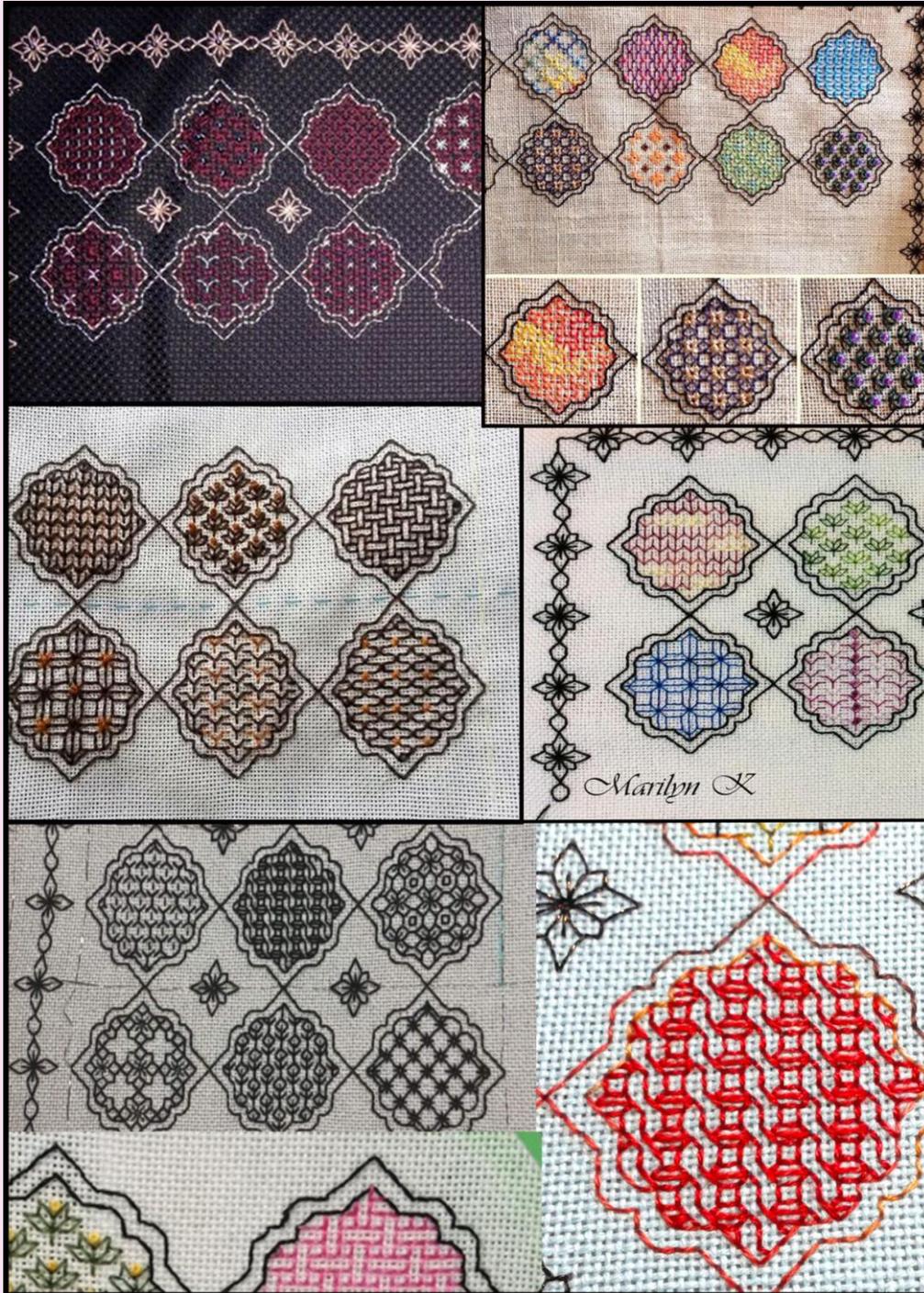


*Kerry's labelling is a good way to remember the threads that have been used!*

## Blackwork Journey Blog – June 2015

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The way Kerry has written the information on her block is really helpful. It is easy to forget which threads have been used on a project. I always keep a list on masking tape and stick it to the embroidery, so if the project is put aside for a while, I know what I have used!



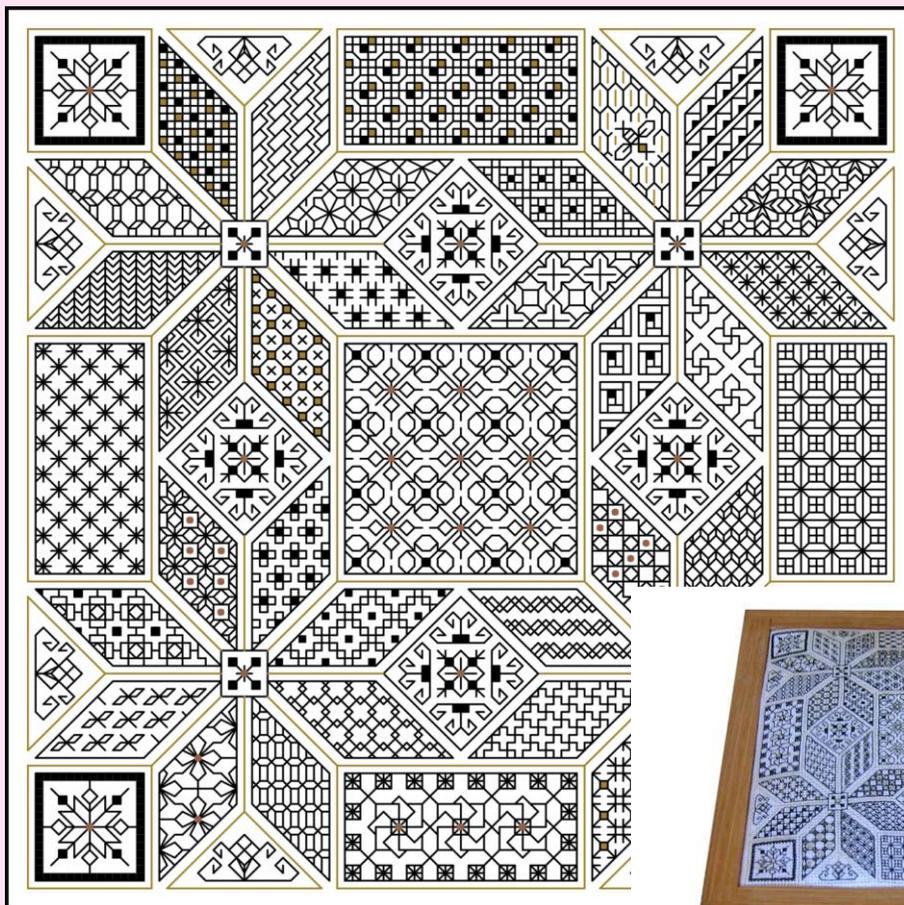
*These are just a few of the different colour combinations. Many more are featured on Pinterest - Elizabeth Almond - Box of Delights and in the Facebook group*

### CH0334 Shooting Star

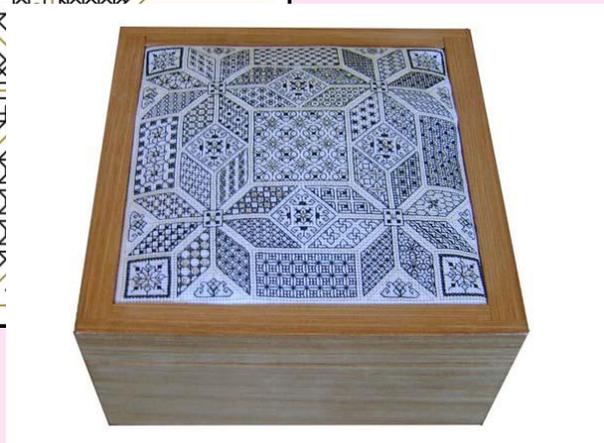
'Wandering Star' was inspired by the song 'Wandrin' Star' sung by Lee Marvin and my thanks go to all the readers who have purchased and stitched the original design, making it one of the most popular designs in Blackwork Journey.

However, I have now been asked to create a partner to 'Wandering Star' so 'Shooting Star' has been designed using new diaper patterns and a border! New patterns and colour schemes are always interesting, but even more so when each pattern is inserted into another pattern. The embroidery was worked in DMC variegated thread on Zweigart 28 count evenweave.

This design is based on stars, squares and triangles with 54 different fillers and repeat motifs to link the design together. Each pattern could be stitched in a different colour to create a patchwork effect, or in a single shade with bead and metallic highlights. There are also some smaller projects included for needlework accessories or gifts, but the choice is yours!



*CH0053  
Wandering Star*





*CH0334 Shooting Star*

Returning to 'Wandering Star,' Chris in Indiana has been posting regular updates. I love the whole piece of work and the way the colours work together so thank you Chris for sharing your lovely embroidery with us.

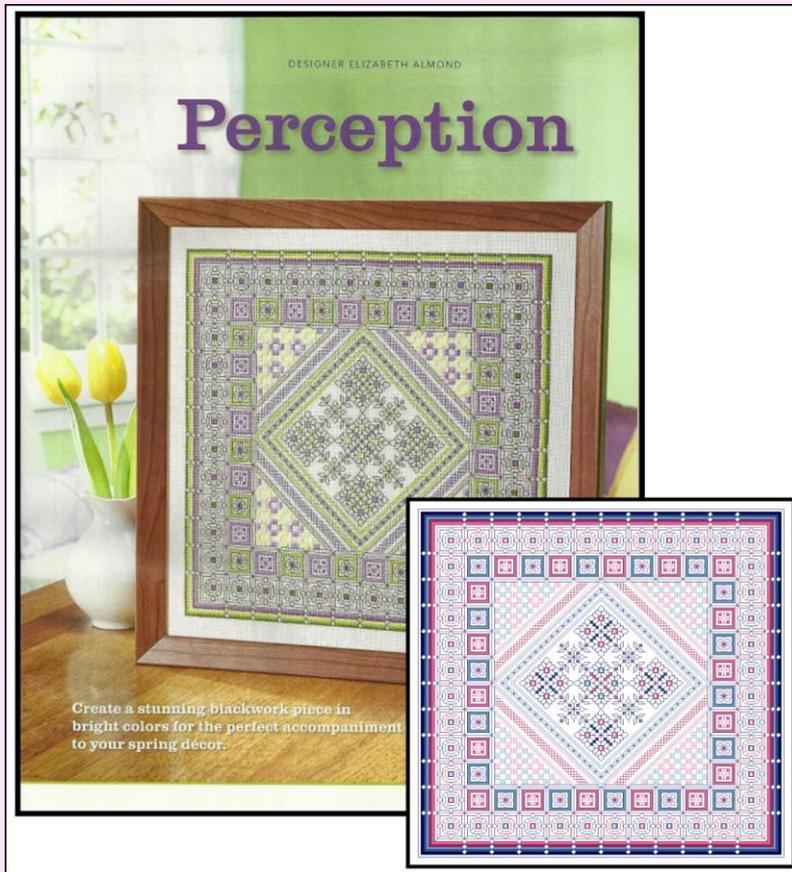
We can learn a lot by looking at other peoples' work, which is why the Pinterest boards and Facebook group have been so useful. If you have problems choosing colours, look at the way different people have tackled the same design.



*Wandering Star embroidered by Chris*

Colour is very personal and choosing the right colours for a particular design can be difficult. We all have a colour palette that we favour, but it is often good to look outside our comfort zone and explore colours and threads which we would not normally use.

A good example is two magazine articles I designed in one colour, but the editors wanted alternative colour schemes so I redesigned the two pieces with very different results.

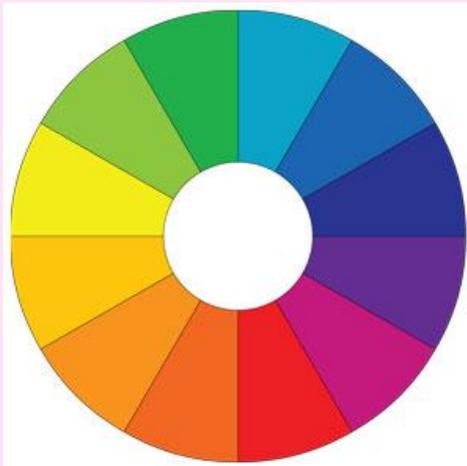


‘Perception’ was originally designed in shades of pink and blue, but the published embroidery used spring colours

*Cross Stitch and Needlework 2011*

‘Miscellany’ was designed as a traditional blackwork pattern in black and gold. The published embroidery was a redwork design.

*Just Cross Stitch 2013*



*Using a colour wheel can help!*



*Just Cross Stitch 2013*



### *Creating a Memory!*

*Like all photographs there is always a story behind the picture.*

*This embroidery was created by a reader as a Mother's Day gift for a friend who had lost her Mum. It is a really special piece and I am sure will remind her friend daily, not just of her Mum, but of the kindness of her friend.*

*Embroidery touches people's lives in many different ways!*

*Thank you, Lilian.*

### *Luzine Happel*

Finding interesting and informative web sites is like finding gold and Luzine's site on Schwalm Whitework is just such a nugget!

Deutsch  
English

blog Schwalm Whitework Luzine Happel Library Shop Impressum

Blog archive with thumbnails

Home → Blog archive with thumbnails

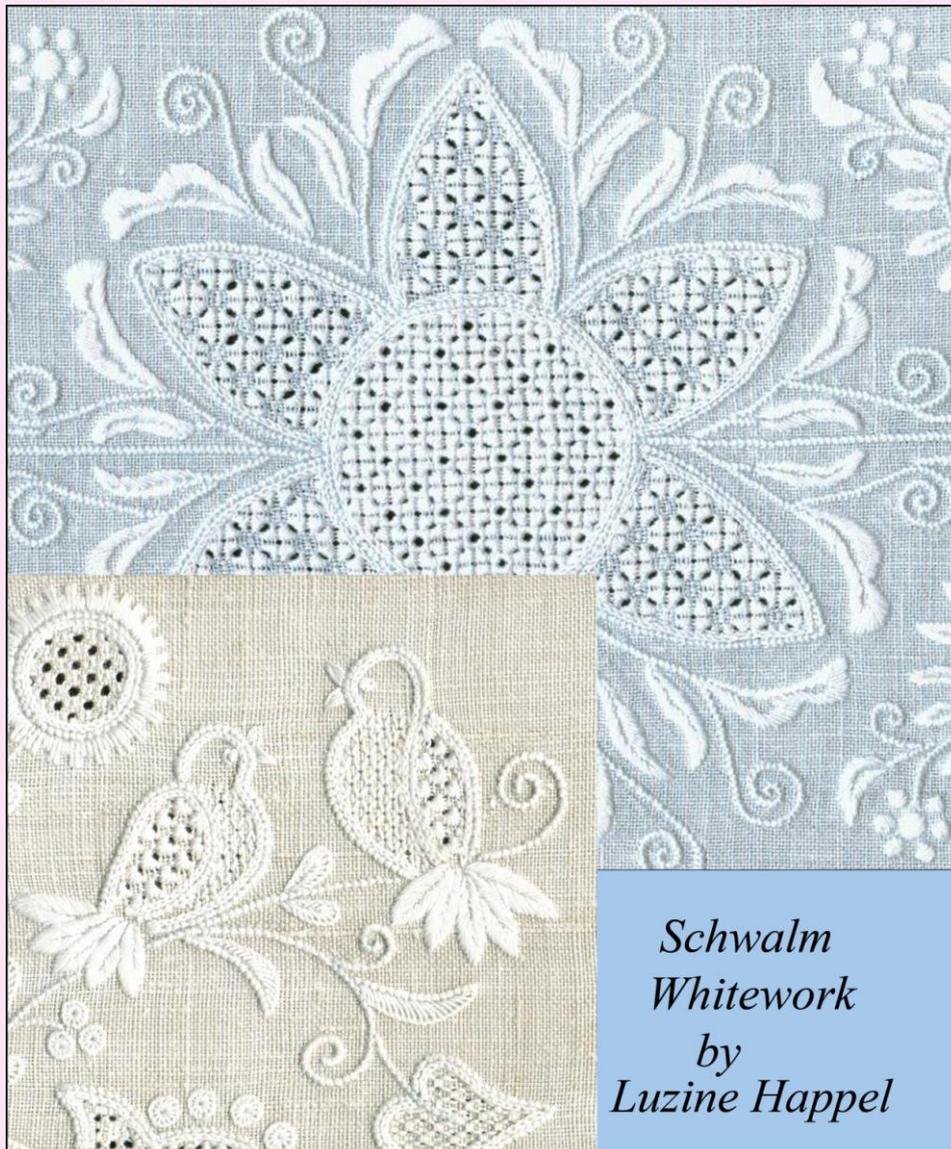
Testing Fabric Suitability for Schwalm Whitework 9. May 2015	Schwalm Designs (8) – Designing a Project (3) 2. May 2015	Ideas Workshop – Pincushion (2) 25. April 2015	One Schwalm Design – Two Interpretations (3) 18. April 2015
Schwalm Designs (7) – Designing a Project (2) 11. April 2015	A Prize-Winning Easter Egg 28. March 2015	Easter Eggs using a wax-resist method 21. March 2015	One Schwalm Design – Two Interpretations (2) 14. March 2015

Luzine, who lives in Germany where Schwalm embroidery originates, is a specialist in her field and is more than willing to share her knowledge through her excellent Blog and well illustrated books.

### *What is Schwalm whitework?*

Schwalm whitework is worked on densely woven (high thread count even-weave) linen. The embroidery is worked in a variety of specific techniques and combinations. The pattern areas are filled with counted-thread embroidery. The borders are filled by other non-counted embroidery stitches.

Many large motifs of simple figures (tulip, heart, circle and bird) are outlined with Coral Knots, Chain stitches and sometimes, additional ornamental stitches. The motifs are then filled in with a wide variety of drawn thread stitches.



Open areas between the large motifs are filled with tendrils, usually stitched in Coral Knots and small leaves and sometimes small flowers are worked in Satin stitches or Blanket stitches.

Edges are decorated by various hems; Four-sided Stitch hem, Peahole hem and Needleweaving hem to name but a few.

Needle lace is used to fill areas of circles as well as for decorating edges.

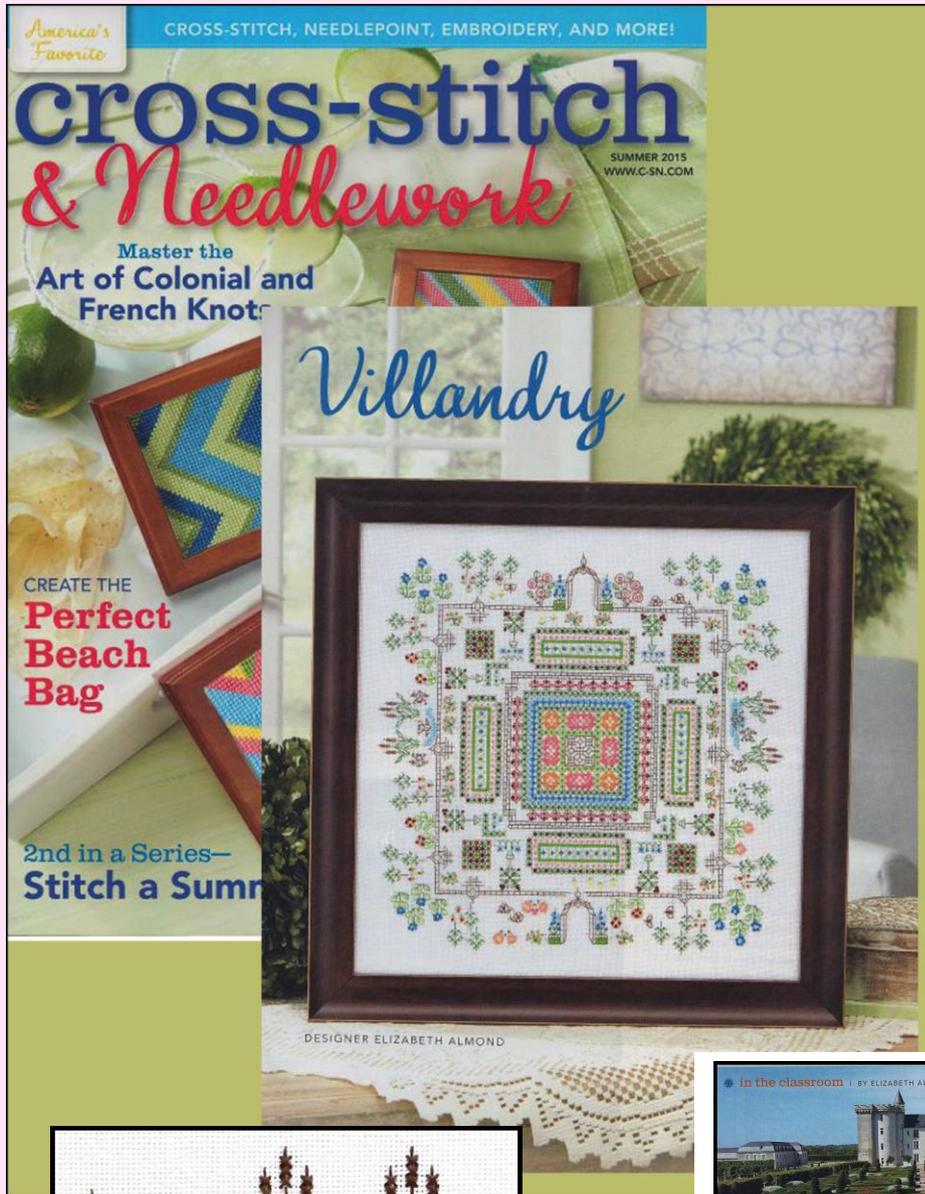
If you would like to explore this technique and see some wonderful examples of her work visit her website at: <http://www.luzine-happel.de>



*New blackwork and pulled thread work design  
PR0028 Butterfly Kiss*

*New publications in May and June*

Two new designs have been published this month. 'Villandry' has been published in the Summer edition of 'Cross Stitch and Needlework' along with an article 'In a Classroom.'



*This design uses lots of Colonial knots if you want a challenge!*



For the United Kingdom readers ‘Stitches’, the Embroiderers’ Guild magazine includes a design called ‘Gate of Flowers’.



*‘Gate of Flowers’ is based on the gates at a French Chateau*

I hope you have enjoyed this month’s Blog and look forward to welcoming you back in July!

Happy stitching,

*Liz*