



Blackwork Journey Blog

August 2015

Block 6 - final part

New E-book

Talented readers

Simple Snails - just for fun!

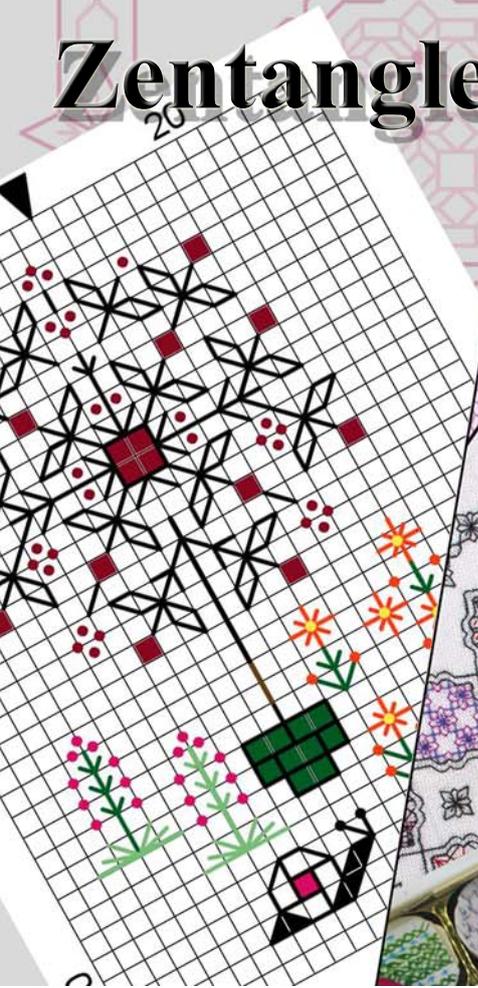
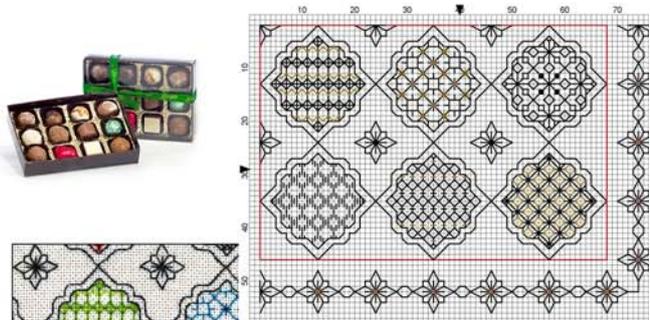
Zentangle +

**Blackwork Journey
'Box of Delights'
E-Book 4**

BOX OF DELIGHTS

Blackwork Journey - Designs by Elizabeth Almond

Block 6 Patterns 31 - 36



New projects

designs

This month sees Block 6, the final part of 'Box of Delights' and a new e-book for 'Box of Delights'

It has been an interesting project to share with you and the response has been very positive. I hope you have enjoyed working it as much as I have enjoyed creating it!

New e-book 'Box of Delights' - extended

This is an extended version of 'Box of Delights' with 54 pages of original and additional projects, for example 'Fondant Delight', 'Christmas Ornaments' and other ideas for that really personal touch. Two alphabets are also included in the book.



EB0004 Box of Delights extended. Original designs plus new projects, ideas and charts for you to enjoy!

'Fondant Delight from EB0004 'Box of Delights'



BOX OF DELIGHTS

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Block 6 Patterns 31 - 36



Nicky has used some of the chocolates from 'Box of Delights' to decorate her candle holder. What other ideas can you think of?

Two Facebook Groups and Pinterest Board

I would like to thank all the readers who have sent me their e-mails and photographs for the Facebook groups and Pinterest boards.

The 'Box of Delights' Facebook group will remain online to enable people who have just started or are thinking about joining, to be able to ask questions, share ideas and post photographs. The group is a 'closed' one, which means that only the people within the group can see what is posted.



The 'Blackwork Journey - Elizabeth Almond Designs' Facebook group is growing steadily and readers are able to ask questions, share information about Blackwork and post their designs. As it is not possible to do this within a monthly Blog, I am looking forward to developing this further both as a teaching and social site. The readers who have joined the Facebook group for Box of Delights are very welcome to join both groups as they cover different aspects of embroidery.

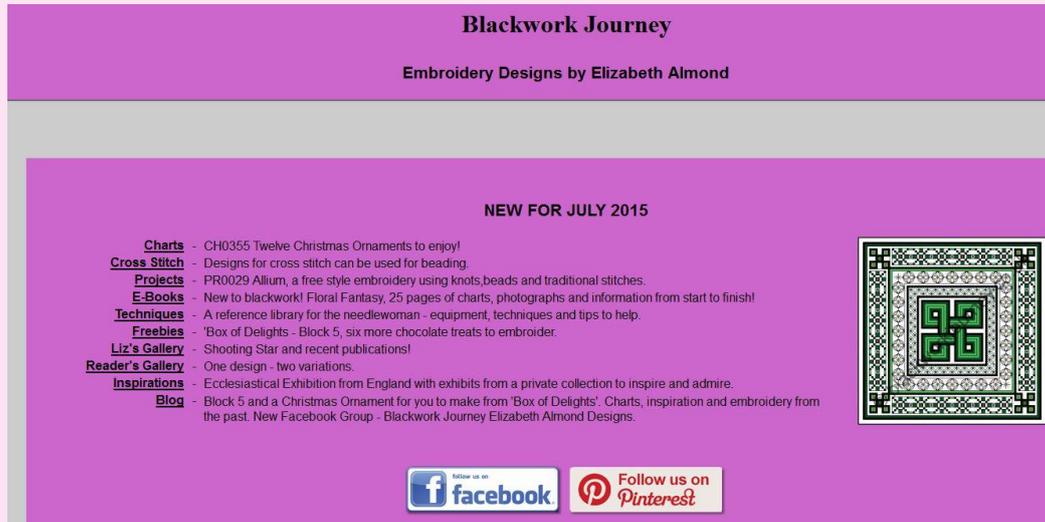


<https://www.facebook.com/groups/blackworkjourney/>

The Pinterest 'Elizabeth Almond 'Box of Delights' and other boards are still growing as readers photographs are sent to me and it is really exciting to see how many different interpretations there are. The different threads and fabrics

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that have been used are really interesting and some of the brands that have been used I never seen before!



Facebook and Pinterest Buttons can be found on the Home Page of Blackwork Journey

There are six Pinterest boards to explore. Click on the buttons on the Home Page in Blackwork Journey and it will direct you to both Facebook and Pinterest.

Future project – Pandora's Box

The next free project is being charted, graphed and stitched at the moment and the introduction will appear in September to enable readers to think about the threads and materials required.

There will be two versions on the design, one for Aida block weave and the other for evenweave in two different colour schemes. This means that everyone will be able to use their favourite materials.

The evenweave project

This design will include four different techniques - blackwork, Assisi work, pulled thread work and cross stitch.

The Aida project

The Aida project will include three different techniques - blackwork, Assisi work, cross stitch and some alternative blocks because it is not possible to work pulled thread work on Aida.

There will be photographs of the different techniques at every stage for you to explore and develop and a Facebook group and a Pinterest board will be set up specifically for Pandora's Box'



Extract from the new FREE project 'Pandora's Box'

Stressbuster! Adult colouring books and Zentangle

There is a new craze sweeping the UK at the moment and I don't know whether it has reached other countries yet, in the form of adult colouring books! They are being promoted as an activity to relieve stress, soothe your soul and feed your creativity.

I know when I was a child I enjoyed colouring in and so do my grandchildren, but I never thought that I would purchase them as an adult. However, they are a wonderful source of inspiration and if you are not confident drawing your own designs for embroidery, then I suggest having a look to see if they appeal to you.

Even the physical act of colouring is restful and actually choosing the colours can help develop your own sense of colour and awareness. There are colouring books available on many different subjects from mystical creatures to flora and fauna, so there are books to suit every taste.



Beautiful adult colouring books to explore and enjoy!

Another aspect worth considering if your drawing skills are limited is Zentangle.

Zentangle is as old as the history of art and echoes the designs, symbols and patterns found in many cultures, (Mayan, Maori, Celtic and American Indian, for example) through to modern times.

It is a self-help art therapy practice to enhance relaxation and focus and is known to many artists as a way to create structured designs through drawing various patterns. In a sense it is a modern form of 'doodling' but it is calming and relaxing.

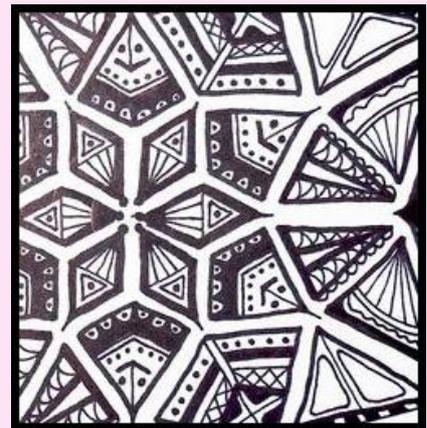
Zentangle art is simple and requires only a black pen and paper and you learn to draw as you go. If mistakes are made they are incorporated into the design to become part of it. For me, it provides a sense of satisfaction and any technique which enhances my craft skills, is easy to learn, fun and relaxing to create is worth considering!

Whilst there is a recognised philosophy behind the art, as embroiderers we can learn by stepping back and creating our own simple designs which we can then incorporate into our own work.

Zentangle is:

- beautiful
- creative
- easy
- fun
- relaxing
- portable
- simple and inexpensive

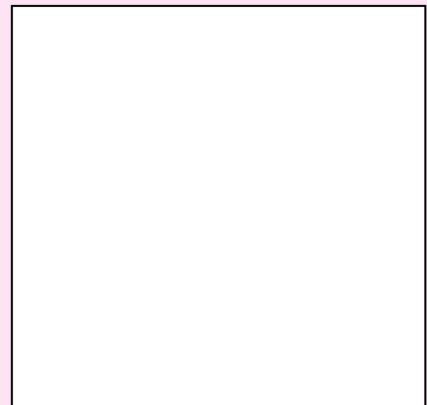
*Fill your own square
with pattern!*



Zentangle can:

- increase your focus
- help you relax
- inspire your creativity
- build your confidence

Research on the internet provides a wealth of information on the subject and many tutorials and examples of Zentangles have been created which you can work through at your leisure.



Pinterest is also a site where people display the work that they have drawn.

The more you develop your own ideas, the more confident you become and this reflects itself in the embroidery that you create. Self confidence comes with practice, but stitching should be restful and enjoyable not a source of stress. Going back to basics and really planning a piece of work before starting can save considerable stress and a lot on unpicking!

Talented Readers

Jacqueline has created a very special gift for her daughter Natacha's birthday. Her whitework embroidery is exquisite and it is a joy to see traditional techniques being kept alive!



Jean W has been working on a series of Islamic style designs and has produced three delightful embroideries on the subject.



Jean W

CH0165 Blue Mosque



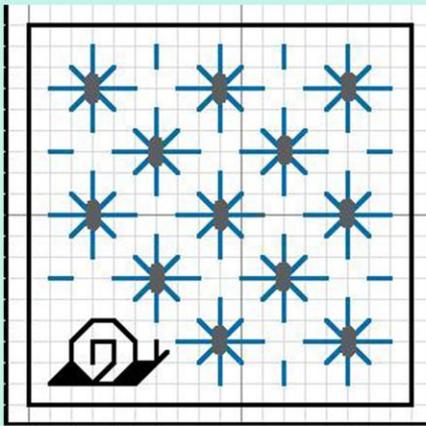
CH0039 Sophia

CH0049 Topkapi Treasure

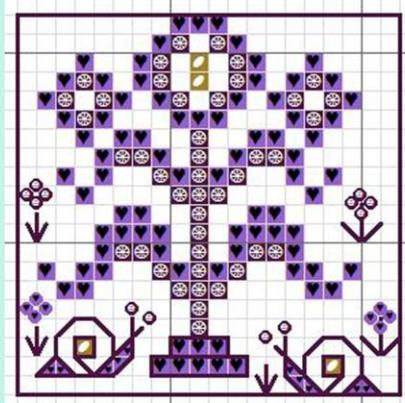
As the designer of these three pieces, it is a pleasure to see them so beautifully embroidered and presented for everyone to enjoy.

Simple Snails - Just for Fun!

When my daughter was young she collected snail shells of every size, shape and colour, so I got into the habit of adding a little snail somewhere in my embroidery just for her. Now she has a daughter of her own I often add two snails!



CH0186 *Midnight Garden*



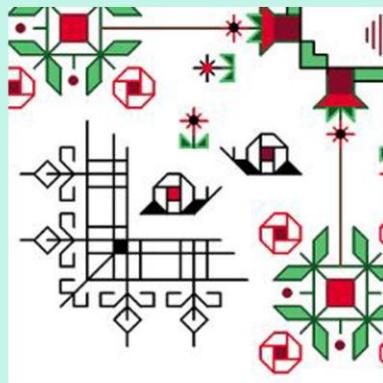
From *NEW SAL!* later in 2015

Extract from 'Gate of Flowers' 'Stitches May 2015



Snails from 'Villandry Cross Stich and Needlework Summer 2015

CH0136
Valentine Garden



Liz's Snails!

Do you add anything unusual to your embroidery?

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working with. Use either 28 evenweave or 14 count Aida blockweave if you are just starting.

There are some half stitches and some half cross stitches in Simple Snails 2. These are very easy to work on evenweave, but a little more difficult on Aida because the block has to be split with a sharp needle. Since they occur in most designs it is helpful if you become familiar with them.

Knots have also been added to the design. These can be either French knots or Colonial knots. If beads are used petite beads are a better size for a small design. They are not too large and can be grouped together easily.

Material:

28 count evenweave or 14 count Aida,
Simple Snails 1 - 4 x 5 inches
Simple Snails 2 - 5 x 7 inches

Threads:

DMC stranded cotton - scraps from the work basket
Needle No.24 tapestry needle
Beading needle
Mill Hill petite beads, one packet (optional)

Stitches used:

Back stitch, one strand
Cross stitch, two strands,
Half cross stitch, two strands
French or Colonial Knots, two strands
Star stitch

Simple snails 2

Author: Elizabeth Almond
Copyright: Elizabeth Almond
Grid Size: 26W x 34H
Design Area: 1.57" x 2.21" (22 x 31 stitches)

Legend:

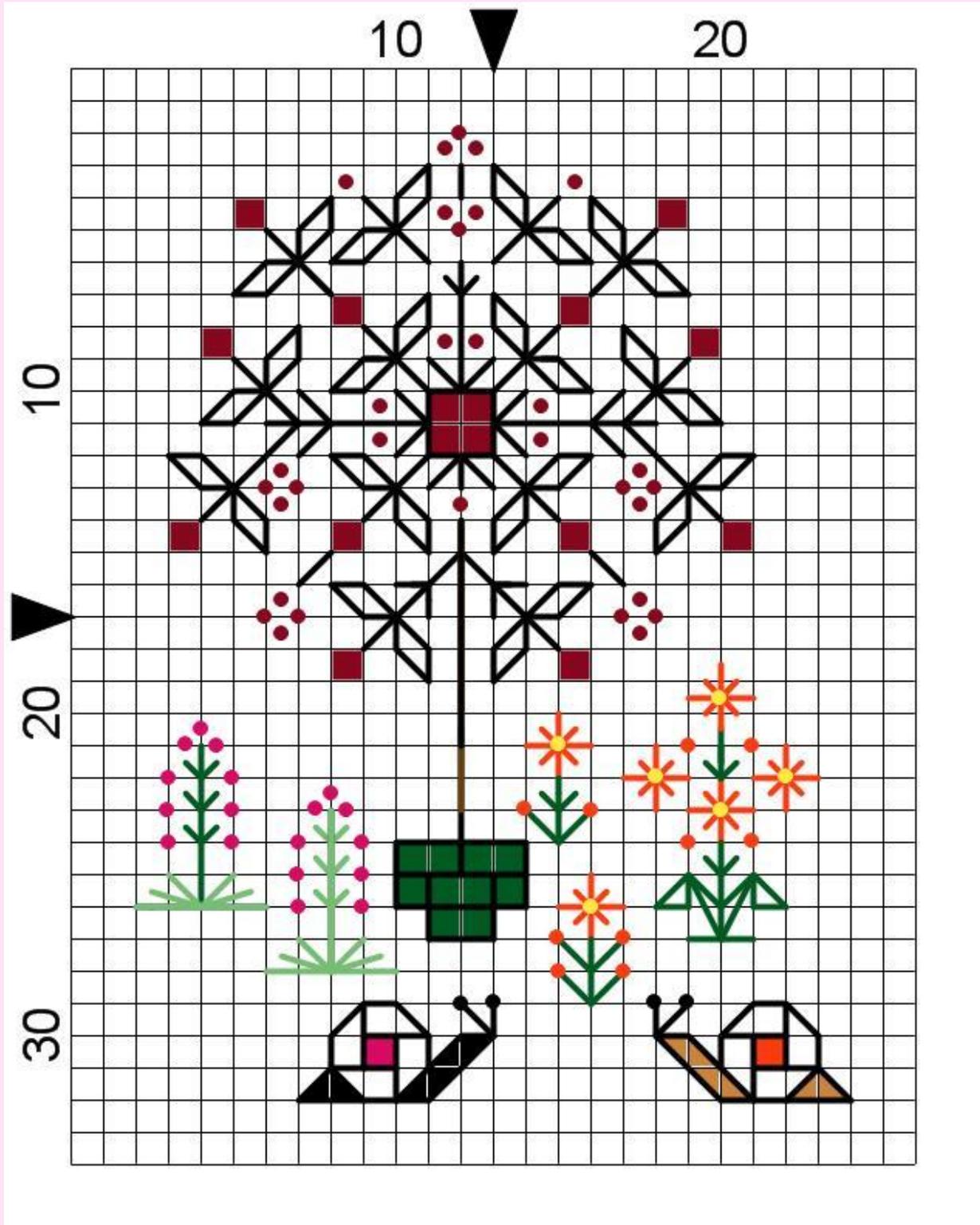
■ [2] DMC 310 ■ [2] DMC 699 ■ [2] DMC 976 ■ [2] DMC 600
■ [2] DMC 307 ■ [2] DMC 606 ■ [2] DMC 815

Backstitch Lines:

— DMC-310 — DMC-320 — DMC-699 — DMC-801 — DMC-606

French Knots:

● DMC-310 ● DMC-307 ● DMC-606 ● DMC-815 ● DMC-600



Simple snails 2

Method for Simple Snails 1 and 2:

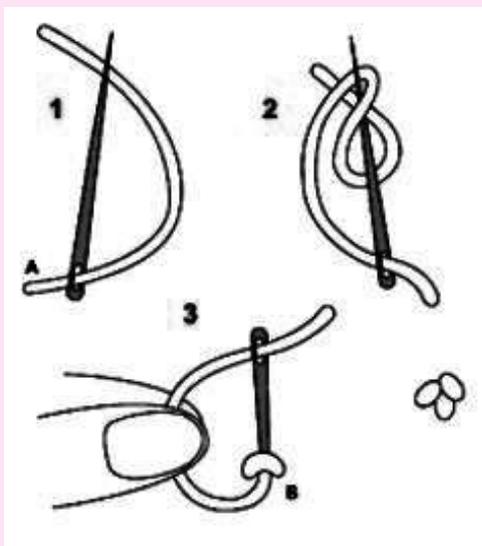
1. Start from the centre of the design working outwards using the correct number of treads indicated.

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2. Work the snails carefully. Start with the cross stitch and half cross stitches and then add the back stitch. This creates a much neater finish.
3. Add the knots or beads after the embroidery has been completed.
4. Place the embroidery face down on a soft towel and press lightly.
5. Mount in a card or small frame.

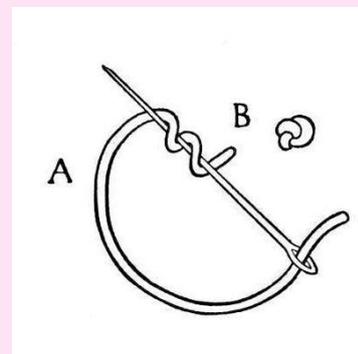
The Colonial Knot is worked in four stages:

1. Bring the needle up through the fabric as you would a French knot.
2. Push the thread away from you towards the RIGHT. Wrap the thread round the needle in a figure of eight. Use your thumb to control the thread.
3. Keep the needle as upright as possible and push the needle downwards into almost the same spot as it emerged.
4. Pull the thread gently to create a perfect colonial knot every time!



a.

b.



*a. Colonial knot
and b. French knot*

I hope you enjoy this month's Blog.

Happy stitching!

Liz

