

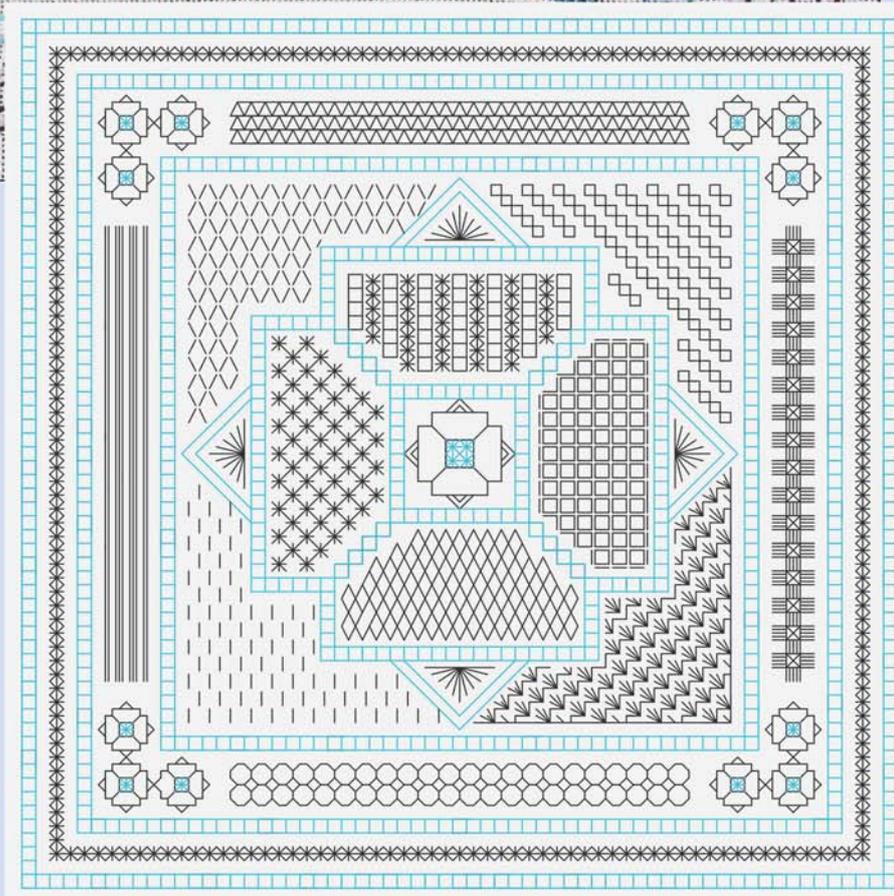
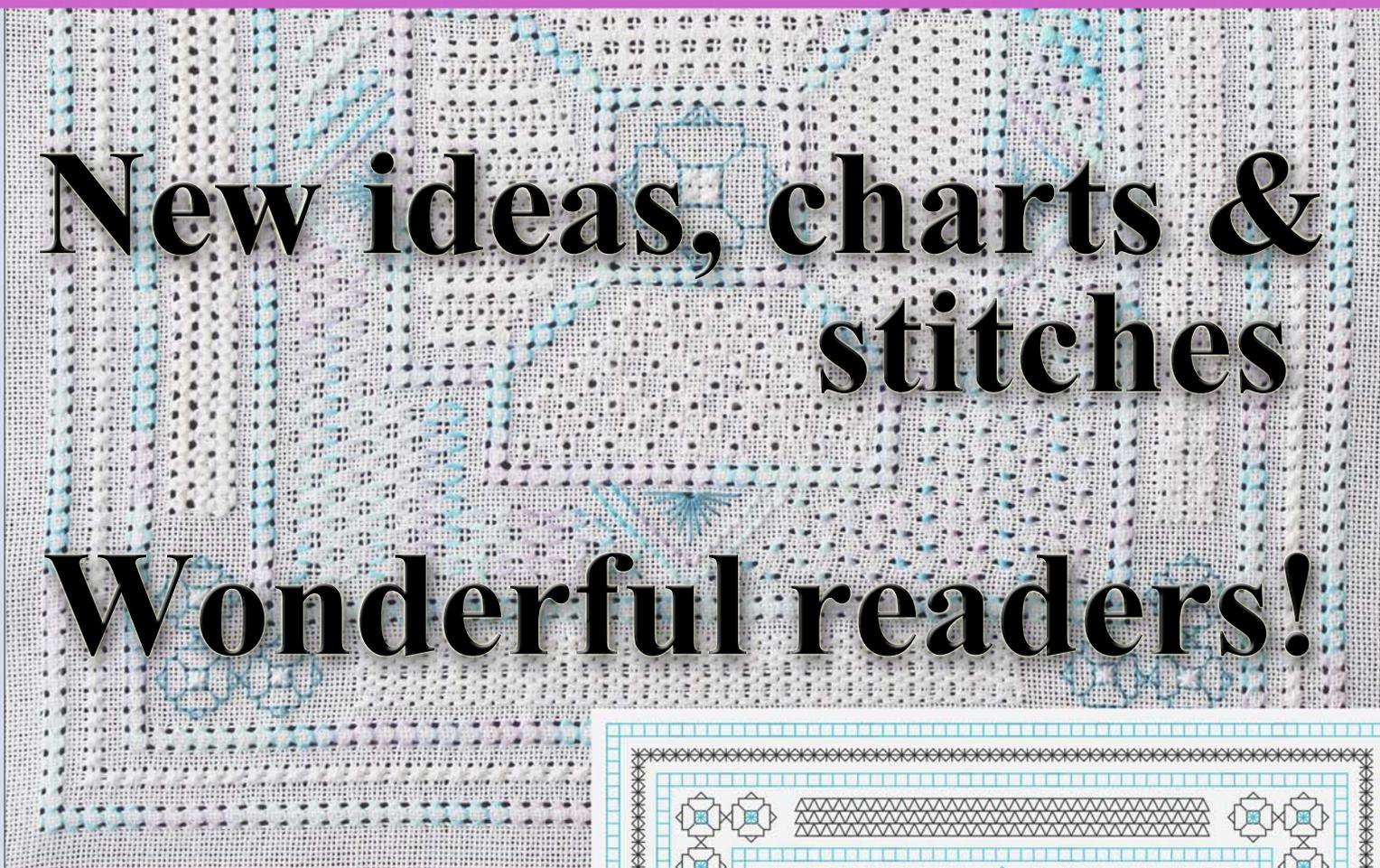


Blackwork Journey Blog

August 2016

**New ideas, charts &
stitches**

Wonderful readers!



Blackwork Journey Blog, August 2016

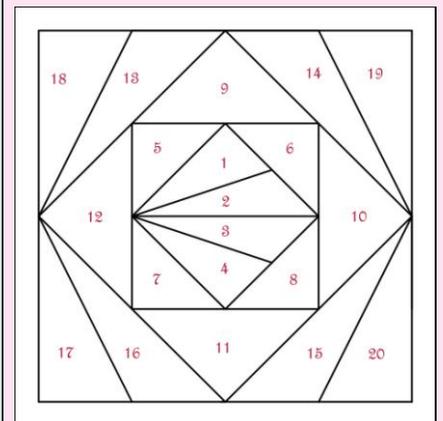
The holiday season is in full swing, the children are on holiday and no doubt, some of you will be packing small stitching projects to progress whilst on holiday. It is surprising what a few minutes stitching sitting round the pool or waiting at the airport can achieve. It also creates interest and I have lost count of the times a complete stranger has come up to me whilst on holiday and asked me what I am doing and what type of stitching it is? In some cases, their bag opens and out pops their craft project which makes for some interesting conversations.

Whilst there are a number of small projects on the Blackwork Journey site, I am always thinking about new ways of creating designs and watching Trish making cards at the 'Knit and Natter' group, I wondered

whether the way she was working could be translated into embroidery?

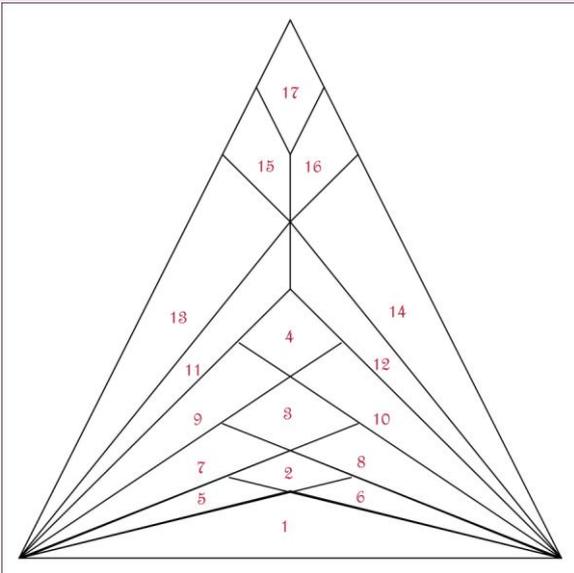
Trish was following a pattern, folding paper shapes and overlapping the pieces to fill a master shape on the card. The way the pieces overlapped created a number of spaces which could be filled with blackwork or pulled thread designs. The design could be either freestyle or graphed as a counted thread embroidery.

With this idea in mind I drew some simple shapes and divided them into sections.



The square has 20 potential design areas.

Trish uses folded paper to create fascinating designs.



The triangle has 17 areas which can be filled. Patterns can be repeated more than once.

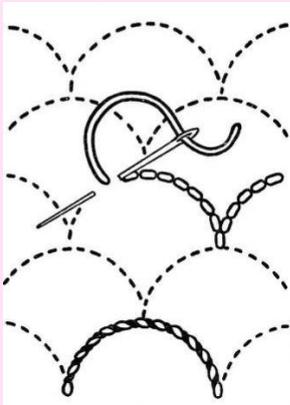
The combinations are endless and pattern areas can be created within any shape so just for fun, if you would like to create your own design, trace the wine glass onto a piece of paper. Divide it into however many sections you would like to fill.

Trace the pattern onto a piece of evenweave fabric using an

HB pencil or a water-soluble pen.

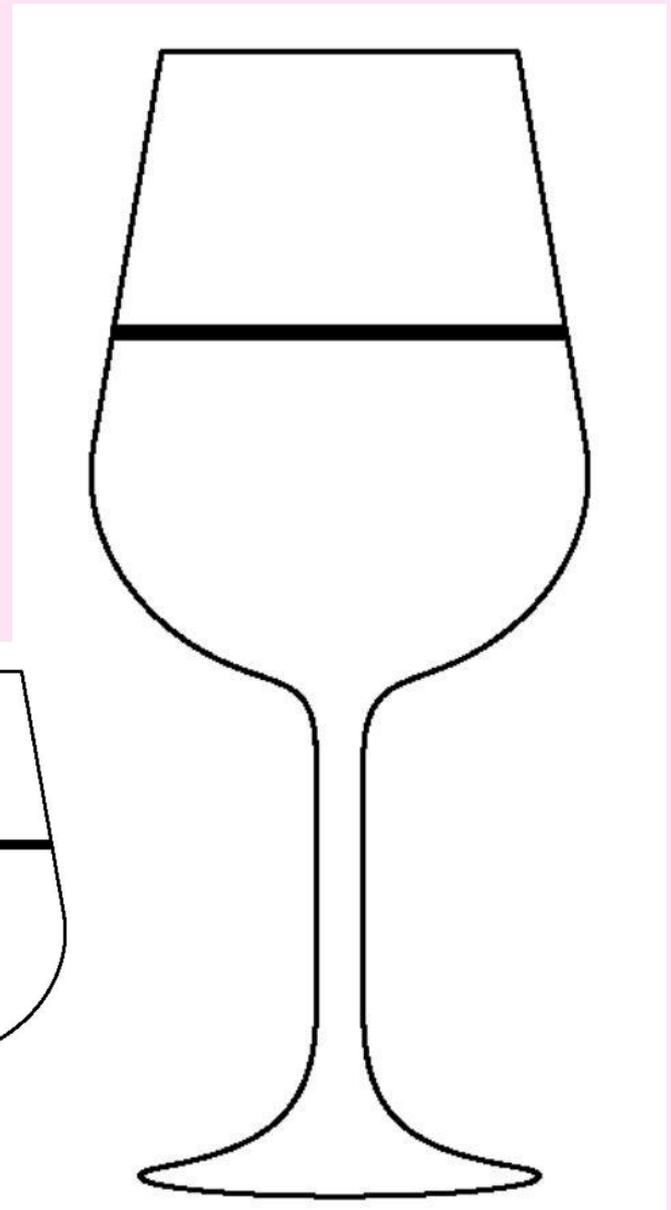
Work the outline in back stitch, two strands of floss and then whip the outline with two strands.

Work the outline of the glass in a pastel shade and then fill the glass with 'wine'.



Back stitch and back stitch whipped

Simple divisions



Stitch patterns can be found in 'Pandora's Box' and 'Box of Delights' in 'Freebies'. Keep the first design simple!

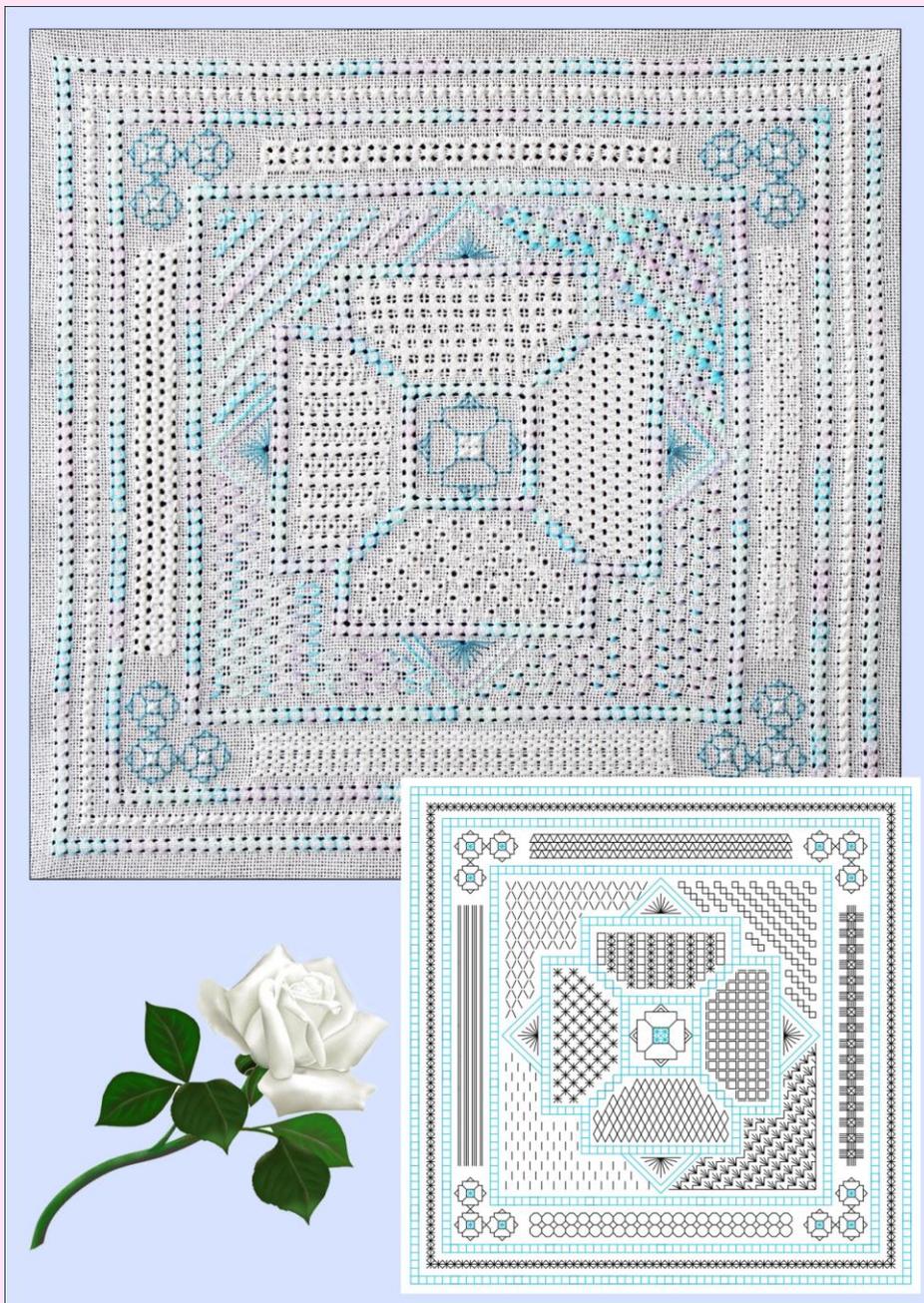
New Chart - PR0035 'Natalia' pulled thread work design

In preparation for my new free project starting in November, I have designed a pulled thread work sampler with fourteen different pulled thread work and two blackwork patterns within it.

Pulled thread work is a very satisfying technique to work, but does require practice to get the stitches correct and the tension right. It must be worked on evenweave fabric and I would suggest a Zweigart 28 count evenweave or a 25 count Lugana. No threads are removed from the fabric unlike drawn thread work, but it is essential that the stitches are worked in a ring or frame to achieve the correct tension.

Lugana 25 count fabric is a good fabric to work with consisting of 52% Cotton & 48% Rayon. It handles well and the threads are even, which is important because many of the stitches are textured. It comes in a variety of colours, including a wide range of pastels. This is very helpful if working white on white is a problem because of the 'glare' factor. I frequently use antique white because it easier on my eyes!

Zweigart 25 count Lugana Pale Rose



*PR0035 Natalia Pulled thread
and blackwork sampler*

This fourteen page design comes with full instructions for every stitch and a clear chart, but always try new stitches out first on your 'doodle' cloth. The stitches have a rhythm to them which only comes with practice but the results are worth the effort.

Pulled thread work stitches included in the design:-

Smyrna cross,
Four-sided stitch Eyelet and four-sided stitch bands
Cobbler stitch
Wave stitch
Detached eyelet stitch
Window filling
Diagonal raised bands
Leaf stitch
Coil filling,
Cable stitch
Three-sided stitch
Mosaic stitch
Ringed back stitch

Some of the stitches are very textured, other lie flat on the fabric!



Work in progress!

Platt Hall Costume Museum, Manchester, England



The Meridith's Button Collection, Platt Hall Costume Museum, Manchester, England

Last month, I published a chart on site called 'CH0 Buttons and Bows'. Since I was a little girl, I have been fascinated with buttons and loved to play with my grandmother's button box. We take buttons for granted, but over the years I have made Dorset buttons, fabric buttons and embroidered buttons, but I have also collected a few unusual ones such as Whitby jet buttons and some Victorian glass buttons, but my small collection was overshadowed by a visit to the The Meridith's Button Collection at Platt Hall Costume Museum, Manchester, England

The collection of over 100,000 buttons was built up by collectors Gillian and Alan Meredith over a 30 year period. Gillian Meredith began collecting in 1968 after finding two floral, black enamel buttons, given to her as a child by her grandmother. Looking at them with adult eyes she appreciated their beauty and the skill and patience required to make them.

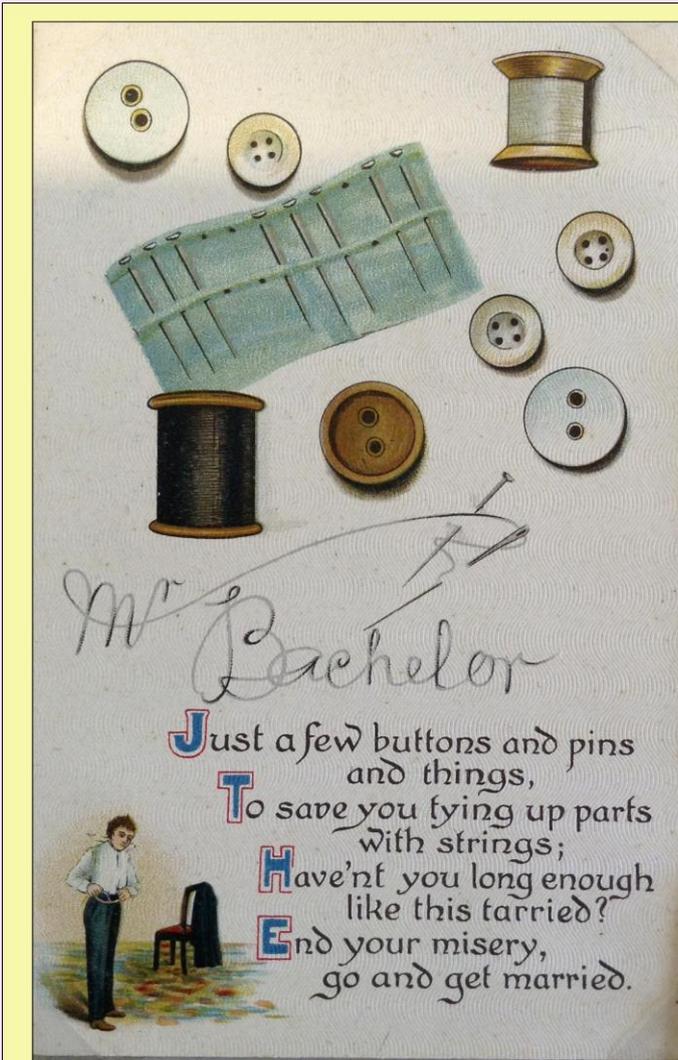
Collecting buttons was an affordable hobby and didn't require a large storage area. Gillian discovered specialist sales, auctions and antiques shops becoming more interested in the rarer items. Embossed mother of pearl buttons, porcelain buttons, carved toggles, Wedgewood cameo buttons and the simple fabric button used to fasten underwear are all on display, each one offering an insight into past eras. Her husband Alan, eventually caught the collecting bug and specialised in civilian uniform buttons.

There was a growing public interest in buttons, but no comprehensive display anywhere so they decided to open the first button museum in 1988 and moved to Ross-on-Wye to do so. Enthusiastic visitors often had stories about buttons and some had worked in button factories.

Running a museum and caring for the buttons was an expensive job and eventually they decided to sell the collection to the gallery and it now forms part of the museum collection where everyone can see the exhibits.



From the beautiful and unusual to the practical buttons reflect our history!



Attaching buttons is not always done by sewing!



Every type of material has been used for button making from the bones and horns of animals to wood, fabric, glass and ceramics.

Start your own collection? Check out the auction sites.

It is still possible to purchase rare and beautiful buttons through specialist auctioneers, but the website below has a detailed article on the history of buttons and many fine illustrations.

<https://www.liveauctioneers.com/news/columns-and-international/page/8/>

Part of a collection of late 19th and early 20th century cast metal, ivory, plastic, wood and glass buttons, the faces decorated with birds, insects and butterflies. The collection sold for £140.

Photo The Canterbury Auction Galleries



Part of a group of late 19th century French gold plated and enamel buttons decorated with flowers. They were among a lot sold for £290. Photo The Canterbury Auction Galleries

Images courtesy of: liveauctioneers.com



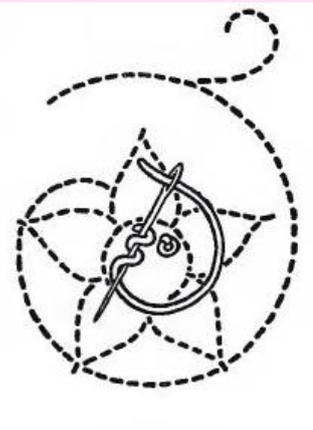
Take a Fresh Look!

Every month I am going to take a fresh look at the stitches we use daily in our embroidery. There are many different ways these stitches can be used to change the appearance of embroidery. The changes may be small, but they can make a real impact.

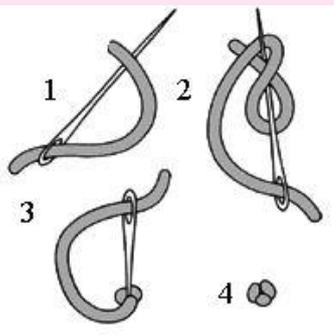
French and Colonial Knots are these 'Stitches of the month'

French knots v Colonial knots - which is the best knot to use and why?

French knot



1. Bring the needle and thread through the fabric at the point where the knot is required. Hold the needle in the left hand and wrap the thread twice round the needle.
2. Still holding the needle, push it through the fabric close to where the thread emerged.
3. Pull the thread through to the back gently until the knot is resting on the surface of the fabric.
4. Move on to the next knot or secure.



Colonial Knot

A Colonial Knot is worked in three 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 you came up.
4. Pull the thread gently and you will have a perfect colonial knot every time!

Of the two I prefer Colonial knots. They are easy to make and every knots looks the same unlike French knots which are less stable.





Colonial knots always look the same! 'Villandry' published in 'Cross Stitch and Needlework' Summer 2015 uses Colonial knots throughout.

Knots in Fashion

An example of French knots was found on this Man's Doublet 1625-35, again from Platt Hall. The doublet or short jacket was worn with trunk hose or breeches and a sword belt and below, a linen shirt with a falling collar or ruff at the neck.

This example was made of natural linen, fully embroidered with French knots and couched thread and fastened with thirty one thread covered buttons.

The pointed sleeves are stiffened with pasteboard 'belly pieces' and the sleeves and upper chest are slashed to show the fine linen of the shirt below.



Wonderful Readers!

Photographs of 'Pandora's Box' are arriving daily and I have added some of the photographs here for you to enjoy but four embroideries really caught my eye this month.



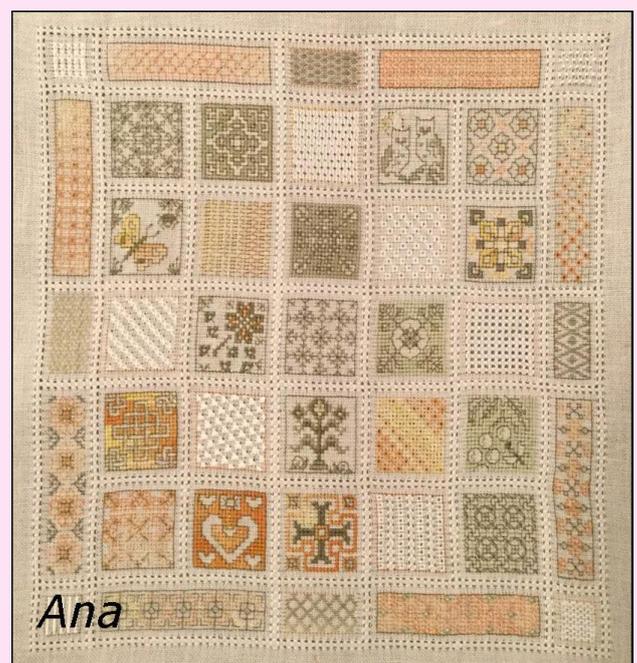
Sandra has turned her embroidery into a mat rather than a picture with a beautifully mitred hem.



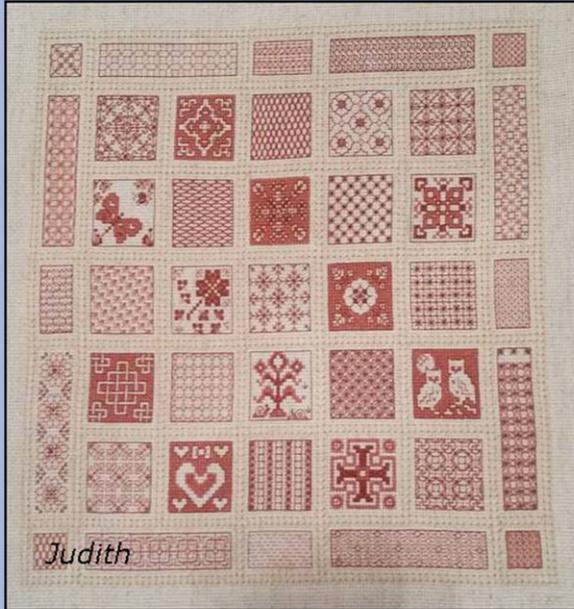
Anita has added her initials and dated the piece - an heirloom for the future!



Katia used a larger piece of fabric and added a very pretty blackwork border to frame her design.



There have been so many different colour variations chosen by my readers but Ana's choice is delightful



I hope you have enjoyed this month's Blog. September includes some early Christmas designs and some more Kogin work.

Happy stitching! Liz



