



Blackwork Journey Blog

February 2012

What can embroidery do for you?



Choosing charts

Needlework shops



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What do you want from life?

Life can often be so hectic nowadays that we do not always take the time to think what we really want or need for our own well being and when eventually we do find what we want, the thought of achieving it can be daunting.

Because of my husband's work we moved house on a number of occasions, often with the loss of friendships, schools, cultural and social activities and as a result, I found that I lost some of the focus of my life other, of course, than my family and I found I needed something new to challenge me.

As a result, I decided to go back to college and attempt a City and Guilds embroidery course over three years. However, little did I know that I would become 'hooked' and it would change my outlook on life forever and eventually lead to 'Blackwork Journey.' Living in a large northern town with the City of Manchester on our doorstep with its many museums, art galleries, theatres, music and needlework exhibitions, proved to be a real bonus!

I made numerous friends during my course and they have remained friends ever since. During my teaching career I have worked with every age range from pre-school toddlers and young adults. However, the skills I learned on the course enabled me to move into Adult Education where I was able to work with adult students and elderly members of the community which I found particularly stimulating and rewarding.

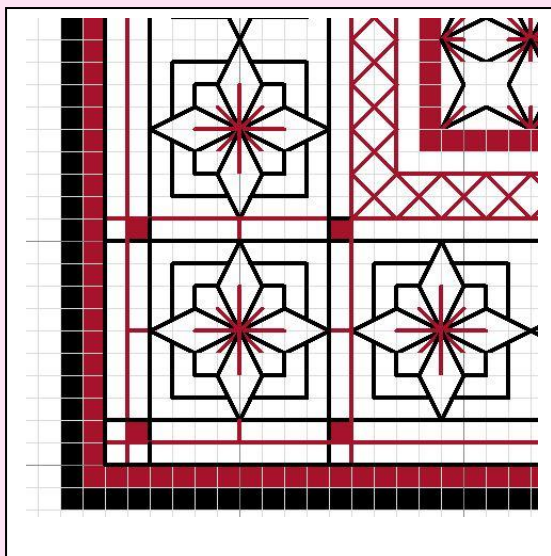
Sadly, my full time teaching days came to an unexpected end as a result of a car accident and a serious neck injury which has meant that I have had to revise my work load and expectations, with the result that I now give talks and conduct Day Schools on embroidery, which provides me with different challenges and levels of satisfaction.

I also decided to enrol on an 'Adobe Dreamweaver' course at college to develop my computer skills despite the fact that I was a complete novice. It was a very steep learning curve, but I learned sufficient to set up my own web site to publish my designs! Through the site I soon found myself in contact with people from across the world from Botswana to St Lucia to Canada and the United States, which I find a great privilege.

So everyone has strengths, which they often underestimate and wherever you live in the world, the Internet and training courses can offer access to unimagined opportunities and with a little effort and determination, one can move from being in a rut or boring routine, to a whole new world of opportunity. Having a meaningful hobby can not only enrich one's life, but also help at times of illness, disability and grief.

For me, needlework has changed my life and despite my physical problems, now provides me with tremendous fulfilment and benefit.

We all have something to offer - think about it!!



*When choosing charts for embroidery look for clear graphs and instructions!
Charts may be represented by symbols, colour blocks or blocks and symbols.*

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Two new sections have been added to Techniques and more patterns have been added to Cross Stitch. These sections will grow during the year so look for new additions. I hope you will find these new sections helpful and if you have any suggestions please contact me.

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I have spoken a number of times of my admiration for a small needlework shop in Ontario, Canada called "Thread and Eye". To me, they epitomise everything that is admirable in a needlework shop. They value their customers and provide an excellent service in every aspect of their work, going far beyond the normal working hours to make the business successful, which in the current economic climate, is not easy. Spare time is spent in hand stitching designs for their shop from their wide range of designs, as well as maintaining their home and other commitments.

If you take the time to read their Newsletter this month

<http://www.threadneye.com>

It gives a clear insight into just what is involved in running a small needlework business, from checking inventories to restacking shelves and the problems resulting from serious thefts from their stock.

I think many of us have an idea that we would like to own and run a small business, but the reality is far more complex and it takes dedication and determination to create such a special business, so well done Kathy and Neale - keep up the good work. You are greatly appreciated!

Happy stitching!

Liz



Two new "Techniques" PDFs have been added!