



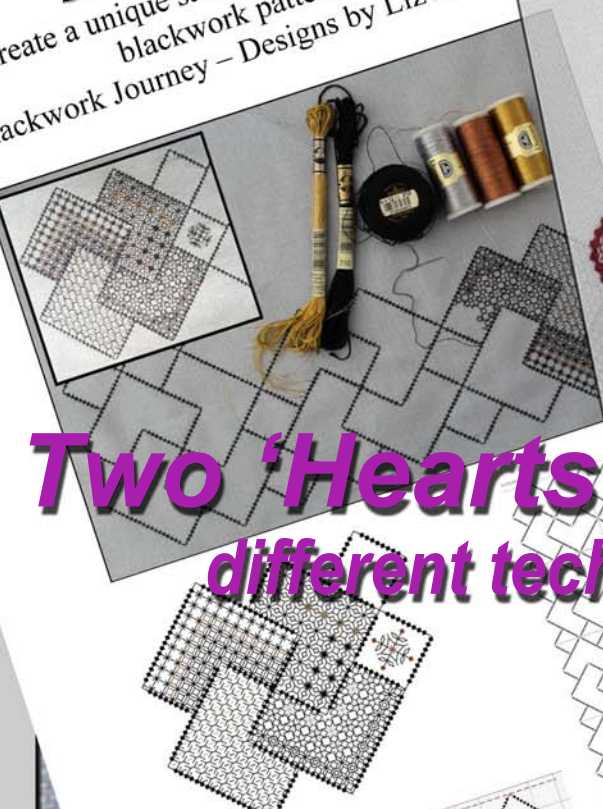
# Blackwork Journey Blog

January 2014

## New style Blog!

## What is 'Save the Stitches'?

SAVE THE STITCHES  
create a unique sampler containing  
blackwork patterns.  
Blackwork Journey - Designs by Liz Almond

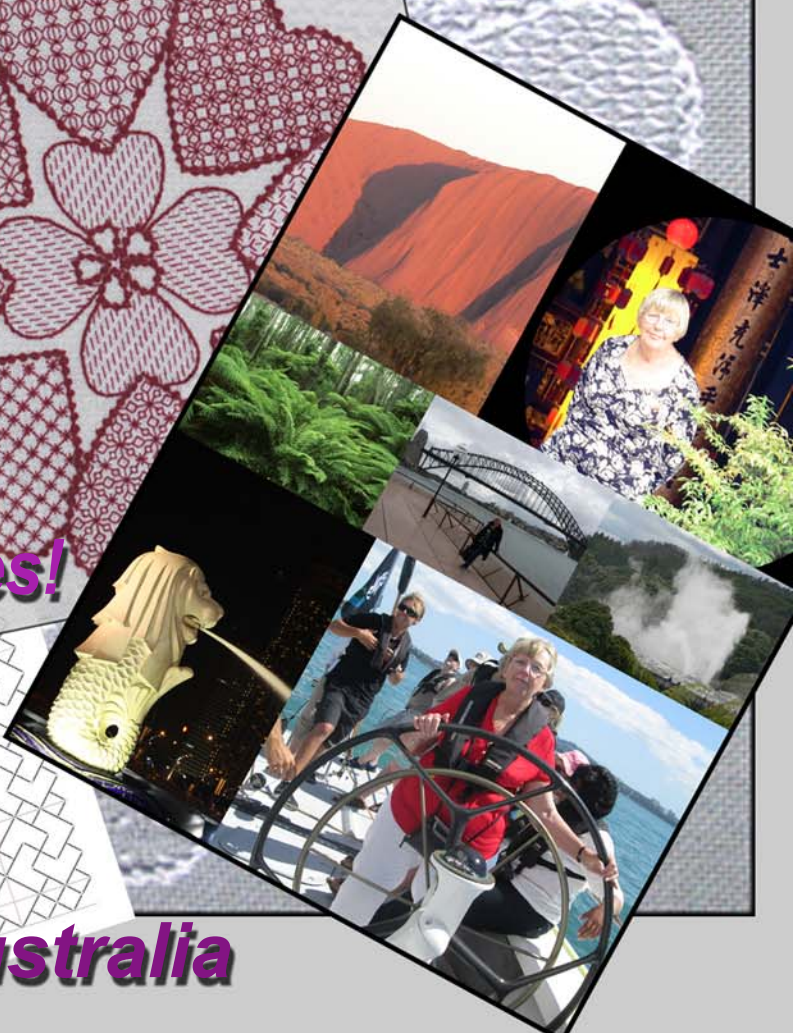


## Two 'Hearts' - different techniques!



## Inspiration Australia

Introduction to project





## Happy New Year!

Another year and a new beginning!

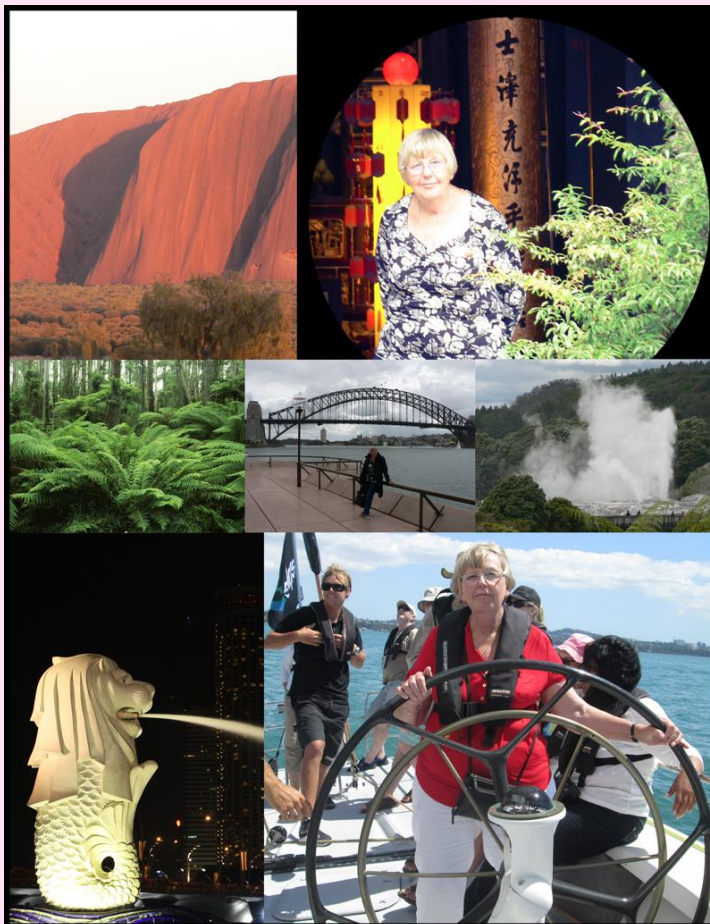
The Blog for Blackwork Journey has become too large and many readers have asked if I can create a format which can be downloaded and kept on the computer. Therefore I have decided to make the Blog more 'user' friendly. Each month just click on the Blog PDF and you will be able to download it to your computer just as you download Freebies or Charts.

It also means I will be able to add more information and broaden the content more than I am able to do at the moment.

I do hope you will enjoy this new approach and your opinions would be appreciated.

2013 was a very mixed year for me, but it ended with a journey right round the world with five weeks in Australia and New Zealand and short breaks in Los Angeles and Singapore, both places we had visited before.

The journey consisted of fifteen flights, one float plane, one helicopter, three boats, two cable cars, two hire cars, two trams, five buses, coaches, an underwater walk on the Great Barrier Reef and sailing an America's Cup yacht!



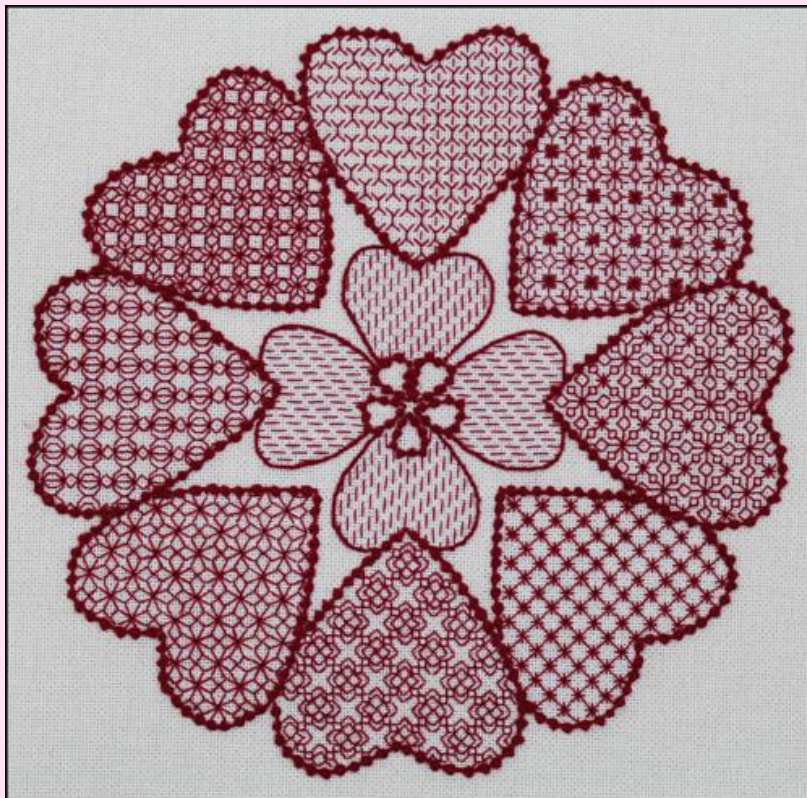
It was certainly a holiday of great contrasts and a source of inspiration for the future as we travelled via Los Angeles with its fancy boutiques to Australia and places such as Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne and Ayers Rock before flying to New Zealand with its beautiful mountains and scenery and then to Singapore with its Chinese temples on our way home.

*Experiences – stretching the boundaries!*

You just do not understand the sheer size of Australia until you realise that the whole of Europe will fit into the country with room to spare!

Naturally, I packed my embroidery and literally stitched my way round the world causing considerable interest wherever I went. When people see someone stitching, they often come and have a look and one thing leads to another with the result that Blackwork Journey has hopefully, gained a few more converts to embroidery!

I always take a spare piece of material so that anyone can have a try which is very rewarding. I use double knot stitch of many of my freestyle design outlines and I had great fun trying to teach the stitch to several people in an airport lounge! Since we travelled right round the world the title 'Love 360' seemed appropriate!



*CH0323 Love 360 stitched in airports round the world!*





*Love 360 showing details of the stitching.*

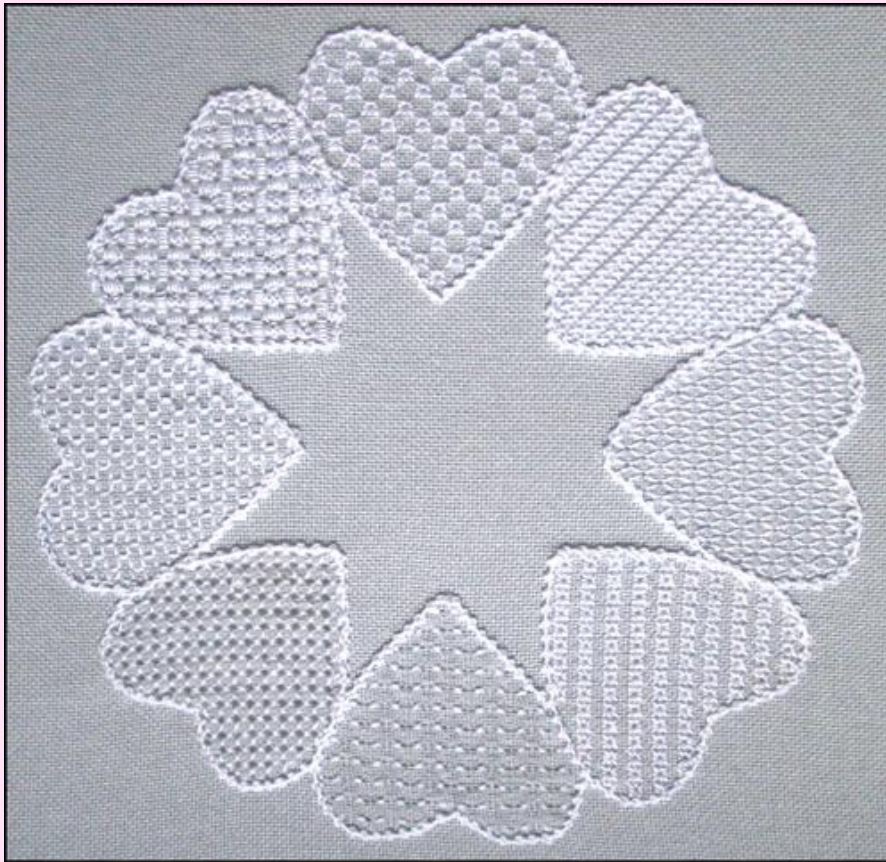
The double knot stitch contrasts with the flatter diaper patterns but the heart outlines could equally be stitched in stem stitch, back stitch whipped or chain stitch!



*Double knot stitch – simple and effective*

‘Hearts’ is a pulled thread design which relies on the texture of the stitches to create the impact. I have used traditional pulled thread stitches worked in white thread to contrast with the pale grey fabric. If working white thread on white creates problems because of the 'glare' from the fabric consider using a pastel coloured fabric. Again if eyesight is a problem consider using a 25 count fabric and thicker thread. Adjust your fabric and your threads to meet your personal needs and you will be able to continue stitching for much longer. A magnifying light /lens are my best friend as I have become older.

In the 'Techniques' section TQ0001 Lighting and Lenses looks at this problem in more detail.



*PR0020 Hearts*

CH0323 Love 360 and PR0020 Hearts in pulled thread work are a lasting memory of a fascinating journey!

Both charts consist of nine different patterns worked on pale grey 28 count Zweigart evenweave. The outline on both designs is worked in double knotted stitch to create an interesting texture and 'frame' the internal patterns. I debated whether to add beads on Love 360, but decided that they would detract from the design.

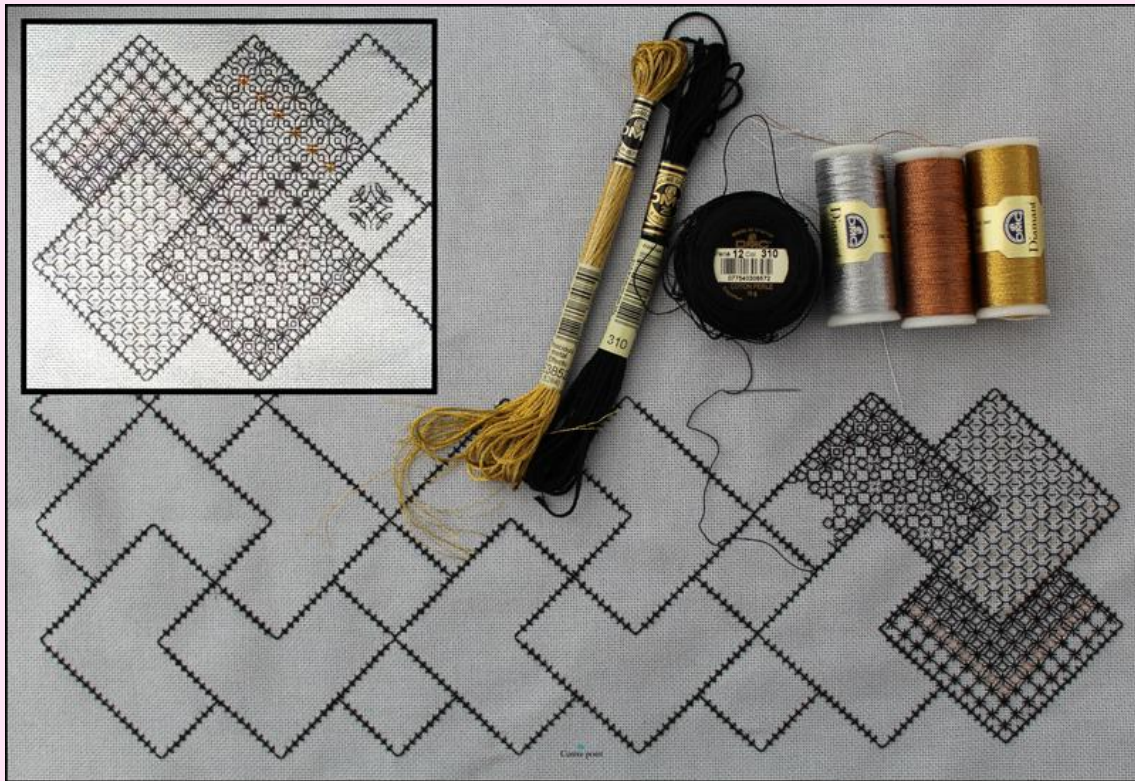
Whether to use beads or not is a matter of personal preference, but if I am using beads in a design I always add them after the embroidery has been completed for two reasons:

- A. the design may be complete without beads and it is not always possible to tell which is preferable when the embroidery is being worked, and
- B. thread always wraps itself round the beads when I am stitching so if possible, I leave them until the end of a project.



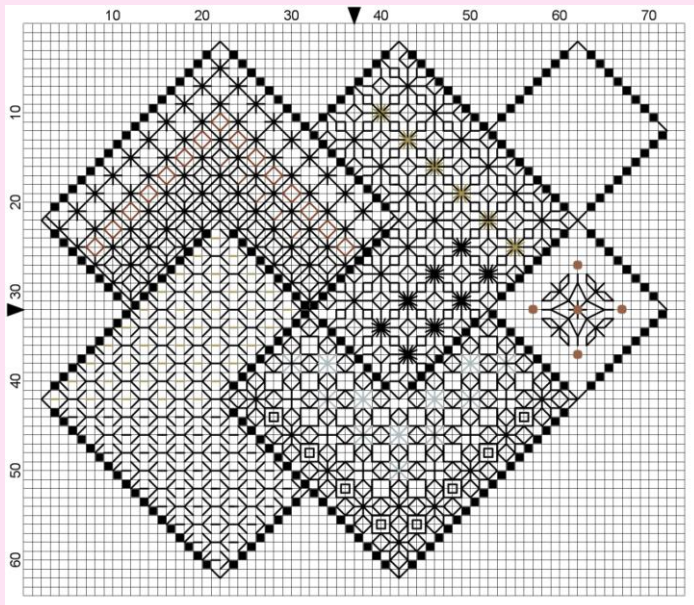
This leads me to the next point.

My 'Save the Stitches' section starts today! Parts 1 and 2 can be found in the Freebies section of the site and you will notice that I have not added any beads. If you want to add them at a later date, then that is quite in order, but I want to get an overview of the design before I add any. I have worked a large part of this project and I am very excited by the different effects that are emerging.

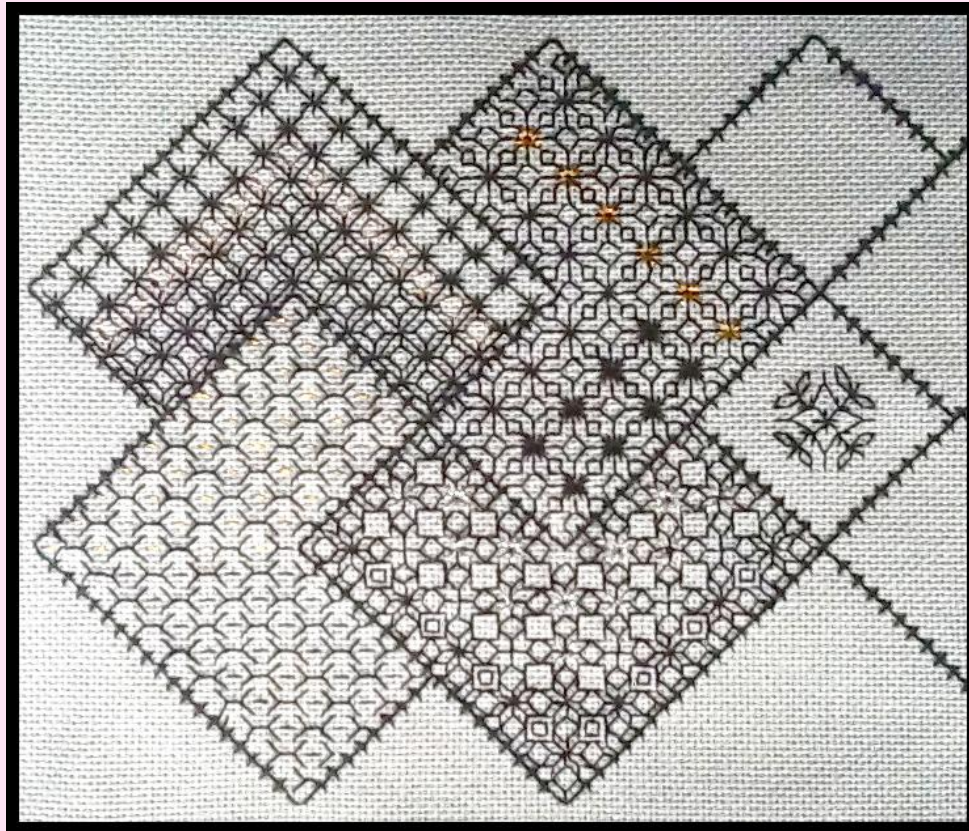


*Save the Stitches - the full width of the design with Block 1 partly stitched*

Each section has more than one variation within it to show how the pattern develops. It makes it more interesting to stitch and one strand of cotton can be used to create light and airy designs as well as dense, heavy effects. Knowing how to place the patterns so that there is a balance between the light and dark areas will determine whether the project succeeds!



*Block 1 Chart*



*Block 1 complete! (Blocks 2 and 3 will be in the February Blog)*

Smaller motifs will be used to break up the blocks of four and to add a different dimension to the embroidery. These motifs can be used to create other projects by joining them together, or by adding borders. One of the objectives of 'Save the Stitches' is to enable you to make choices and decisions in your own work in

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the future. You will know how the patterns appear when they are stitched and how they can be enhanced. There are many variations to be created just by adding or removing stitches and not all of them can be represented in this project, but I hope it will give you a deeper understanding of how blackwork develops and what a fascinating technique it is.

If you have any queries about 'Save the Stitches', do not hesitate to contact me and I will do my best to help.

Happy stitching!

Liz