



Blackwork Journey Blog

April 2015

Box of Delights Block 2

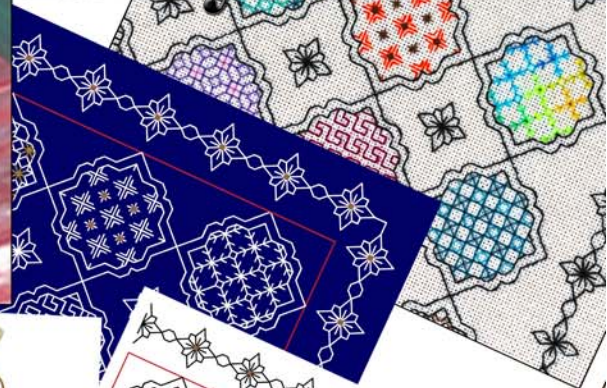
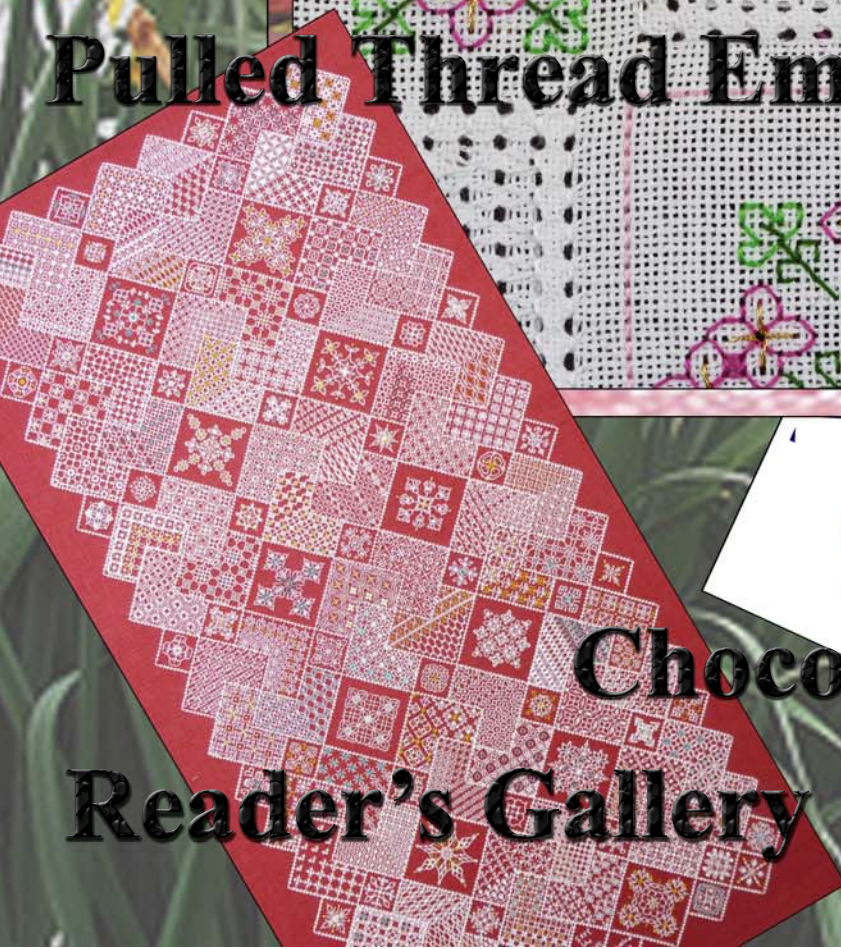
- Borders, making choices!

New Facebook Group!



BOX OF DELIGHTS
Blackwork Journey - Designs by Elizabeth
Block 2 Patterns 7 - 12

Pulled Thread Embroidery



Chocolate Inspiration

Reader's Gallery



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Spring has finally arrived and with it the promise of new stitching adventures, new groups to work with and exciting ideas to develop.

‘Save the Stitches’ is still being worked by people around the world and a number of finished embroideries have been displayed on my site and I am particularly delighted to show the one below that I received from Jacqueline and Natasha, a mother and daughter who live in different areas of France. They have both worked on their project in different colours and with very different approaches but have shared ideas, laughter and enjoyment and produced two beautiful pieces of work, which I hope will grace their homes for years to come!

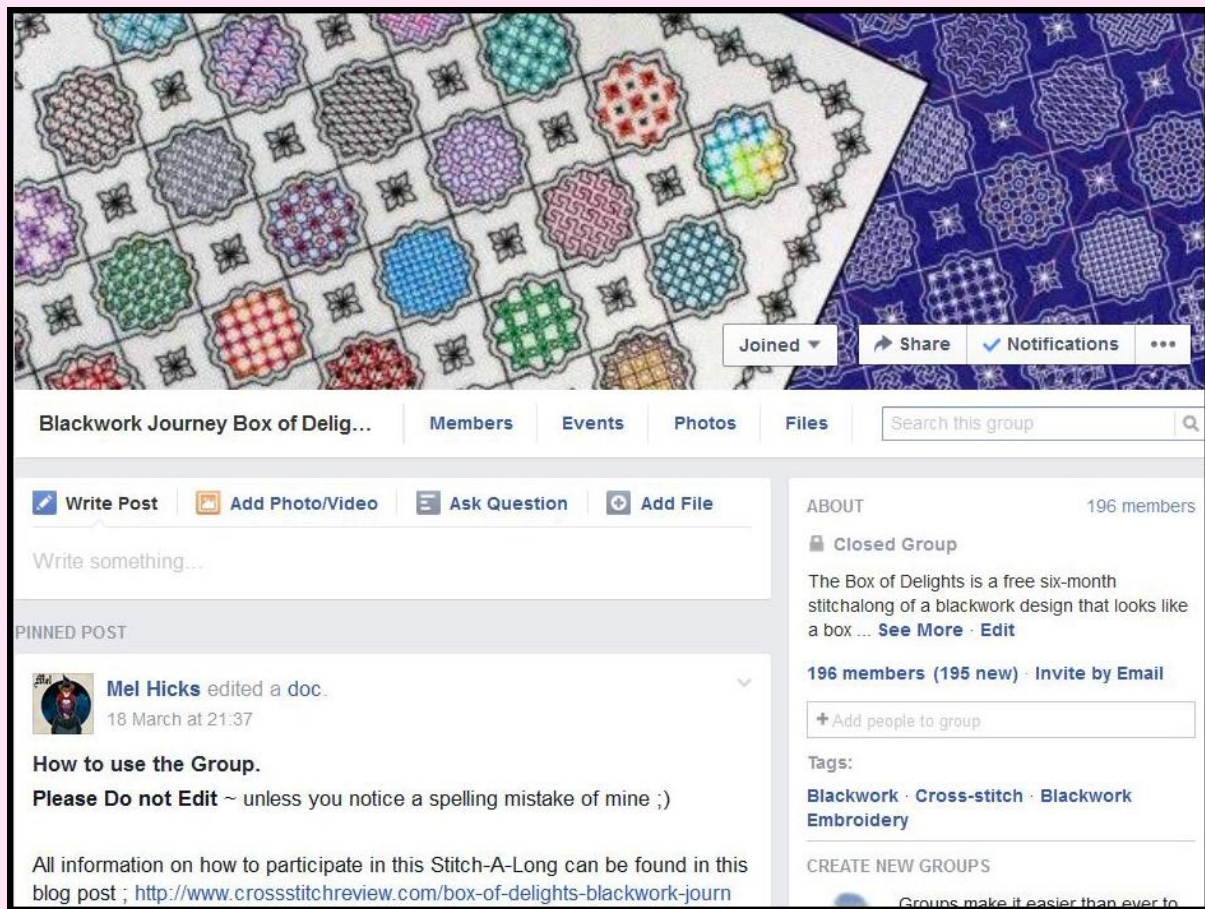


Natasha and Jacqueline

Thank you both for allowing me to be part of your lives and for all the others across the world, who are sharing this project with me.

We tend to forget that as needlewomen, we are part of a much larger community and are playing our part in creating the future history of embroidery.

Hot off the Press!



New! Facebook Group for 'Box of Delights'

Following on from the Introduction and Block 1 going on-line on March 1st, a Facebook Group has been formed for readers wishing to take part in the Blackwork Journey Box of Delights SAL.

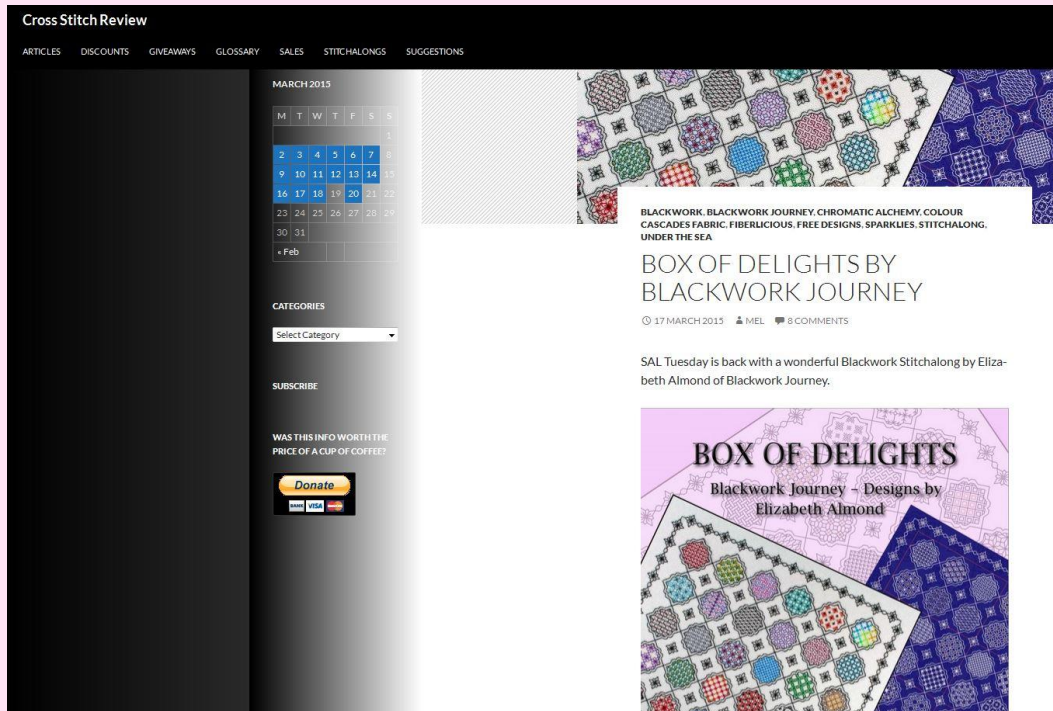
This has been formed by Mel Hicks after a very detailed review on her website: www.crossstitchreview.com and I would like to thank her and Rebekah for all the work they have put into creating this site for you to enjoy.

Not only has Mel explored the project in depth but has listed retailers who can supply both fabric and threads in many different parts of the world.

All information on how to participate in this Stitch-A-Long can be found in this blog post;

<http://www.crossstitchreview.com/box-of-delights-blackwork-journey/>

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<http://www.crossstitchreview.com>

150 readers joined on first day and it is growing daily!

They can create their own albums showing their progress to date and photos will also be added to the Pinterest Elizabeth Almond 'Box of Delights' board so that everyone can enjoy their work.



There have been some unusual thread and fabric choices already and it will be great fun to see how this develops.

If you would like to participate contact the link above or

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

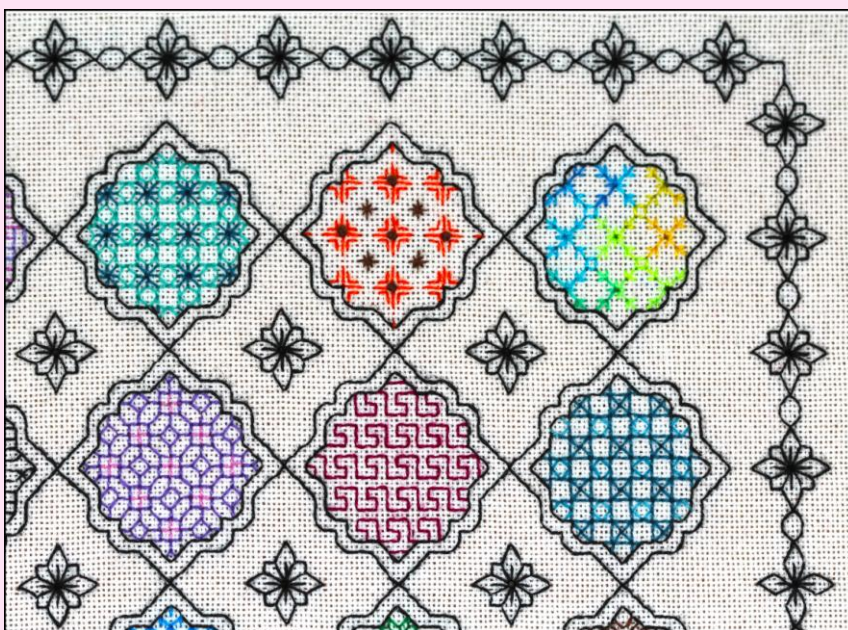
Rebekah's choice of threads



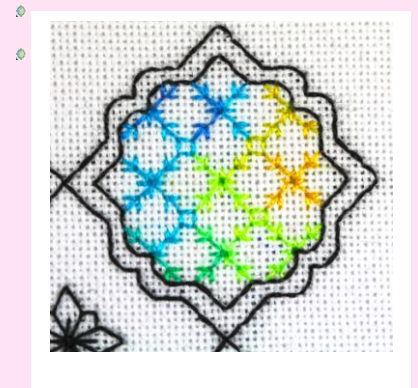
Storm's picture was the first photograph of many I have received for the 'Box of Delights' Pinterest board

The first photographs of Block 1 'Box of Delights' have been received and added to the Pinterest board. Facebook has been full of positive comments and suggestions which are very helpful to me and other readers.

Part 2, with six more chocolates, are published in 'Freebies' this month and variegated threads have been used to dramatic effect. The 'strong' impact of this particular thread means it is only used in small quantities and with simple motifs.

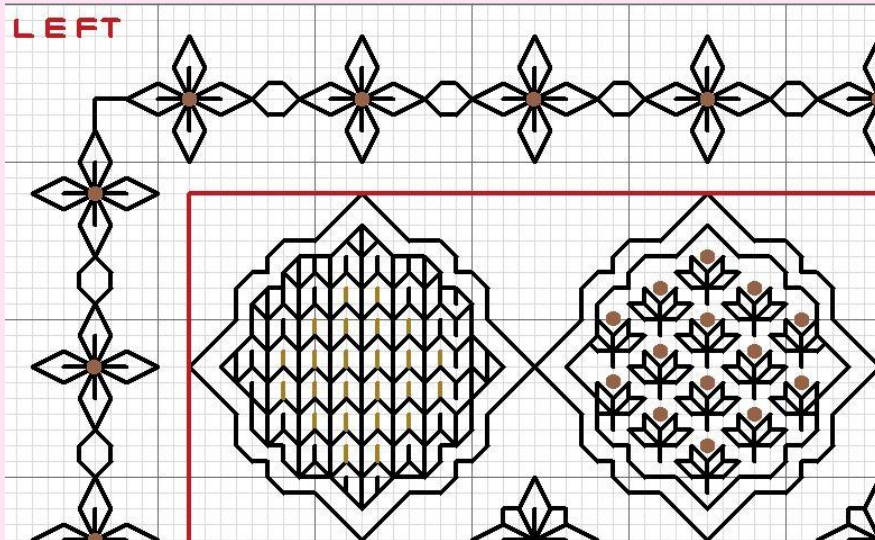


Can you think of a suitable name for this chocolate?

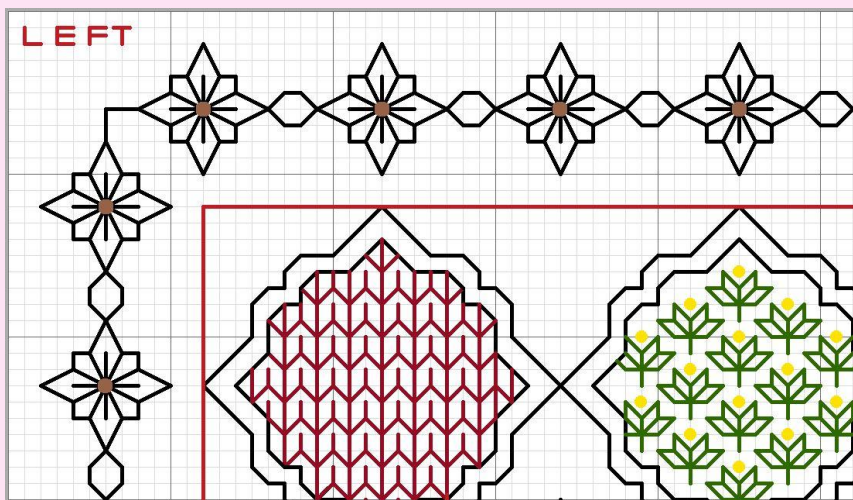


Borders and Corners in 'Box of Delights' – Making a difference!

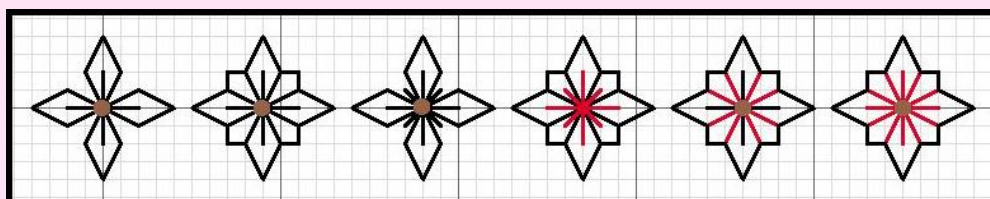
In Block 1 last month, two border chart variations were posted, one a very simple design and the other, more detailed by adding eight extra stitches. Either is correct and the reader can decide which one they prefer. The basic pattern is the same through all the blocks, but other variations can be worked within the border to personalise the design.



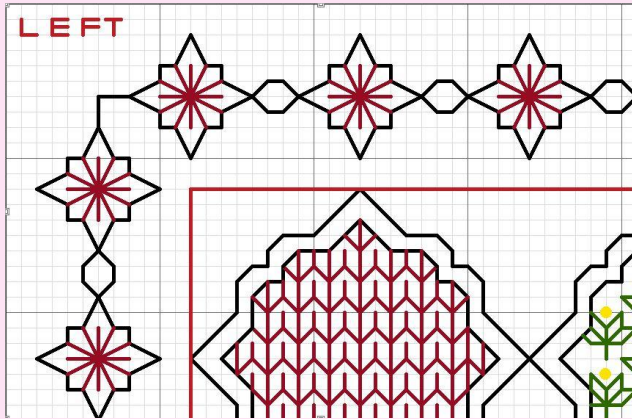
Simple border – add or remove beads to suit your design.



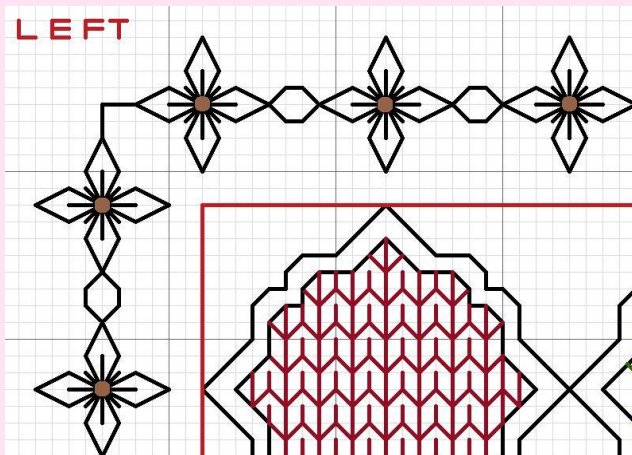
Add eight stitches to create a 'flower' and a more complicated border.



Some the combinations possible within the border



Changing the colours changes the dynamics of the border



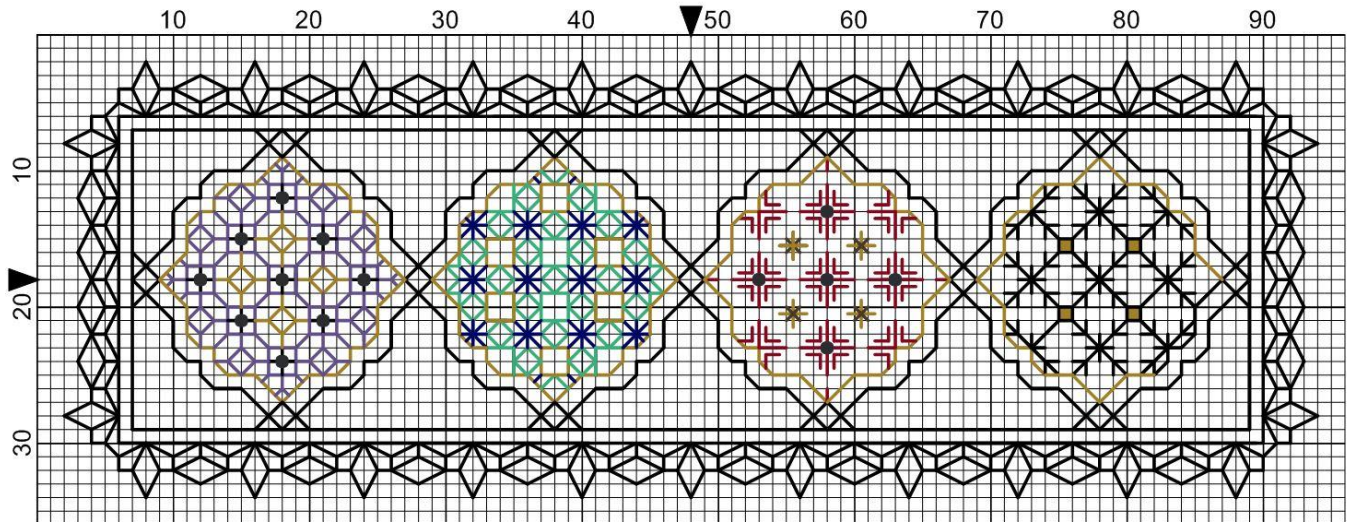
Add extra diagonal lines to create a heavier effect

Whichever variation is chosen it can also be included in the small motifs

between the chocolates.



Mother's Day is always a cause for celebration in the UK and what better way than with chocolates!



Legend:

- DLE-E3852
- Backstitches:**
- DLE-E3852
- DMC-815
- DMC-333
- DMC-820
- DMC-943
- DMC-3031
- DMC-310
- Beads:**
- MHG-81

Liquorice Delight

Four delicious sweets in a blackwork box

Grid Size: 96W x 36H

Design Area: 6.57" x 2.29"

Stitches: 92 x 32 stitches

Backstitch Lines:

DLE-E3852 Dark Gold DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk DMC-310 black
DMC-815 garnet - md DMC-943 aquamarine - md
DMC-333 blue violet - vy dk DMC-3031 mocha brown - vy dk

Small strips of evenweave or Aida fabric can be used for tiny projects.

Remnants of skeins can be used to embroider the chocolates. Nothing is wasted in the needlewoman's basket! Liquorice delight can be added to a guest towel as an attractive border, inserted into a narrow frame, or worked as a book mark just for fun.

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Looking at the chocolates and sweets in Slattery's chocolate shop, not only tempts the taste buds, but generates creative ideas. For example, the use of colours and presentation of this box of marzipan fruits creates a totally different reaction to the display of sweets on the counter!

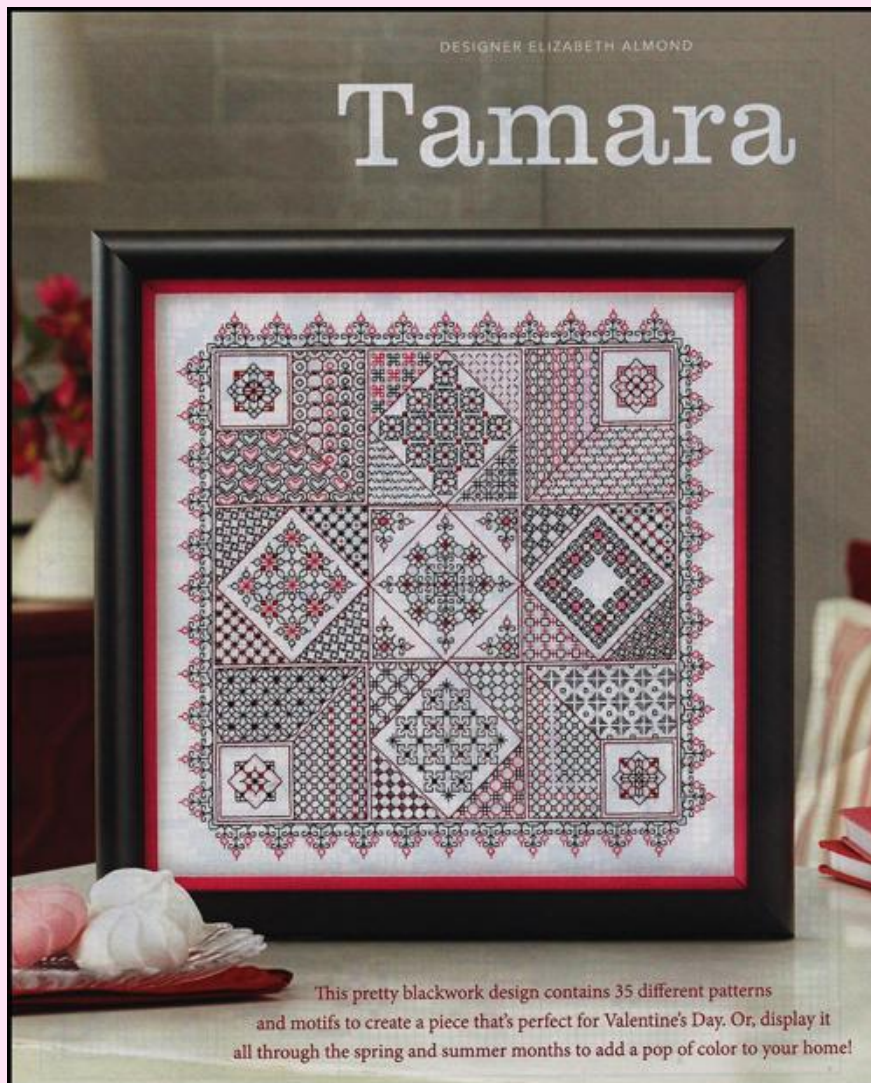


If the colours in the chocolates and sweets can be linked to the embroiderer's colour palette, new ideas begin to emerge with endless possibilities!

What's in a name?

‘Tamara’ is a female name which is understood to have derived from the Biblical name "Tamar", meaning date palm tree. In eastern European countries like Georgia, Russia, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Poland and the Czech Republic it has been a common name for centuries. In Australia, it was very popular from the 1960's to the 1990's and in the United States; the name was fairly common from the late 1950's to mid 1990's.

In ancient Britain, Tamara was the goddess of rivers and streams. The River Tamar that forms the border between Devon and Cornwall derives its name from this spirit.



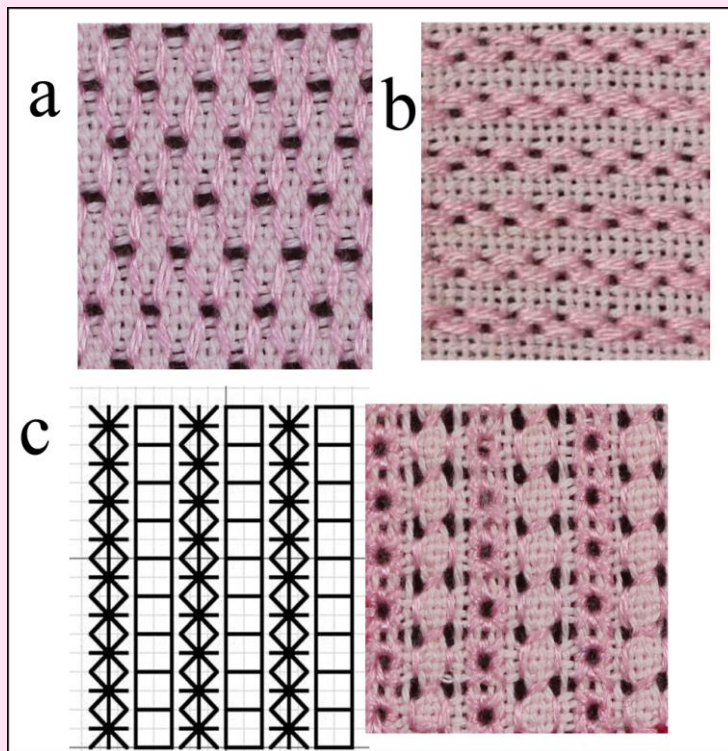
The spring edition of ‘Cross Stitch and Needlework’ features ‘Tamara’ which is worked in my favourite colours of garnet and black.

Blackwork and Pulled thread techniques combined - a new direction for Blackwork Journey

There has been a recent surge of interest in pulled work designs, but there do not appear to be many charts or books available which explore the subject in depth.

As a result, I am in the process of creating a new e-book on the subject covering a range of designs from small, easily worked projects, to two larger designs with a variety of stitches.

Having explored the potential of combining the two techniques, I have become excited by the results. The stitches require practice, but once they are mastered the pulled work is quick to embroider and covers large areas easily which contrasts with the counted thread blackwork patterns.



What is pulled thread work and what fabric and threads can be used?

Unlike drawn thread work the fabric threads are not removed, but drawn together by different stitches which are used to create holes. It is a counted thread technique which has the capacity to be as fine as lace, or by using heavier fabrics, is very suitable for the modern embroiderer.

Sample pulled work stitches

a. Wave stitch b. Cable stitch c. Eyelet and four sided stitch

As a general rule, the fabric should be evenweave and easily counted. The warp and the weft must be even if the stitches are to work satisfactorily. For a novice, a slightly coarser fabric such as Zweigart Lugana at 25 threads to the inch makes a practical fabric to work with and is suitable for both pulled work and blackwork.

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Threads for pulled work have to be strong enough to 'pull' the holes together. Cotton P rle No.12 is an ideal thread for the novice. It is easily obtainable and comes in a variety of colours.

DMC stranded floss can be used (two strands), but it is not as strong and should be worked using short lengths. However, DMC six stranded floss is used for the blackwork patterns.

Both the fabric and threads are readily available and some charts can be found in the 'Projects' section of Blackwork Journey.



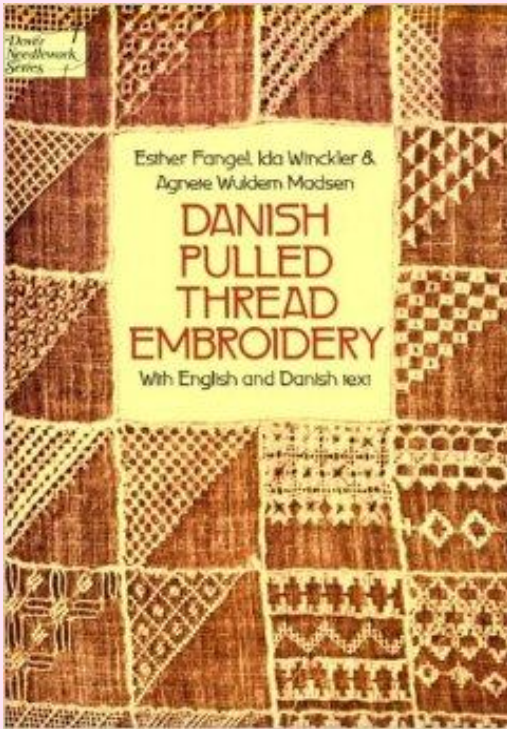
Two books I have found invaluable are:

'Mastering the Art of Pulled Thread Embroidery' by Ilse Altherr

This is available through 'Nordic Needle, Amazon and other internet sources and provides a very comprehensive guide to the technique of Pulled thread embroidery.

PR0021 Flight show pulled thread and blackwork combined.





Danish Pulled Thread Embroidery (Sammentraekssyng) Dover Needlework

by Esther Fangel, Ida Winckler and Agnete Wuldem Madsen

This book provides precise, thorough instructions and illustrations of 45 historic, Danish pulled thread designs. Each is accompanied by a photograph of a finished section of embroidery made with the stitch. There are 84 line drawings, 89 black and white photographs to study.

Both of these books are useful additions to my library.

Extract from a new pulled thread design

What is a doodle cloth?

Ilse Altherr stresses the importance of the doodle cloth! This is widely known in Canada and the USA, but less so in Europe, but it really is an excellent idea for all forms of embroidery.

Basically, it is a spare piece of material on which new stitches and threads can be attempted before stitching on the main project. I have one in evenweave fabric and one in plain cotton for embroidery stitches.



When a stitch is worked for the first time on the doodle cloth, I write the name of the stitch on the fabric, the threads used and anything else I consider essential. It then becomes a reference point and can save many hours of unpicking. It does not have to be neat, but a modicum of organisation helps, so I suggest every stitcher has one!!

Happy stitching, *Liz*