



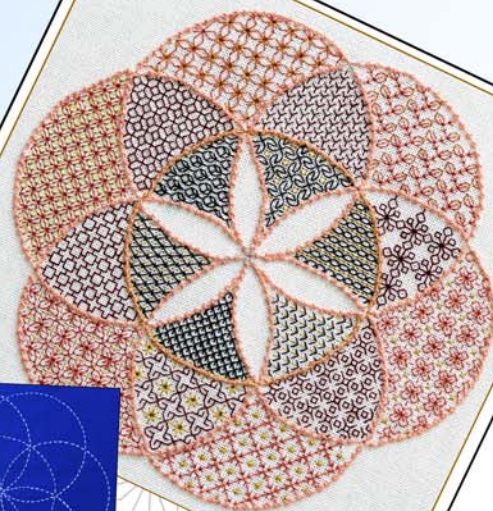
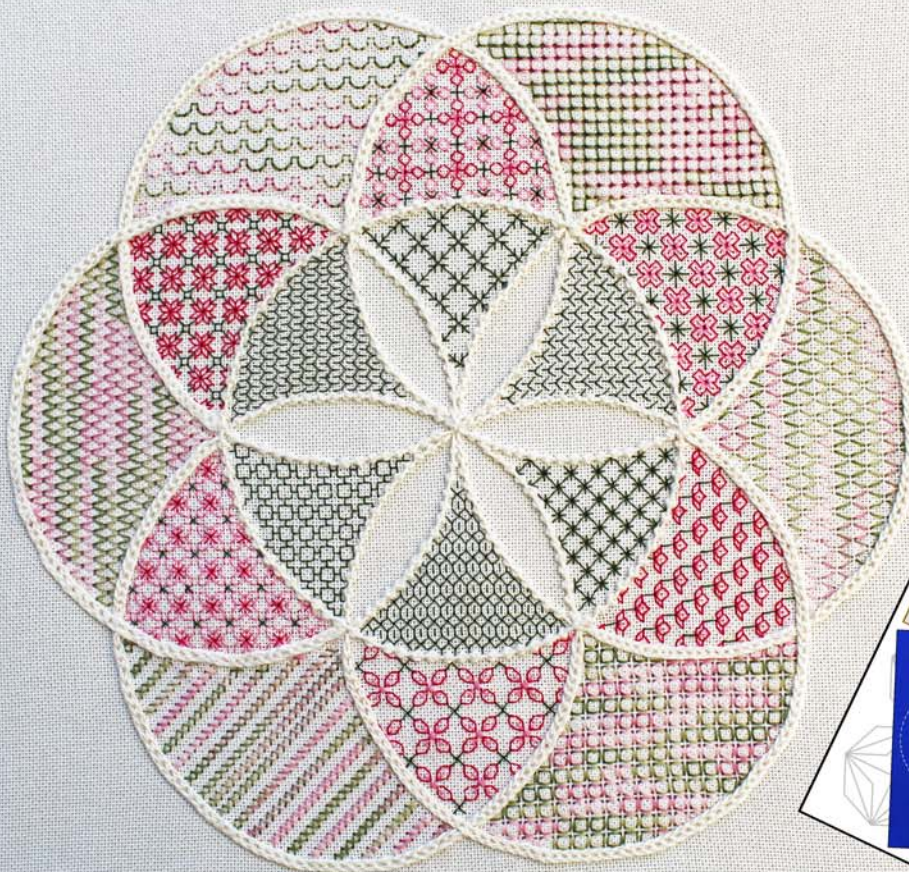
# *Blackwork Journey Blog*

August 2020

**Scarborough Stitchers**  
**Super stars!**



THINK  
POSITIVE  
AND  
STITCH



**Blackwork and  
Sashiko**

### Looking back over July and looking forward to August

July has been an interesting month with many challenges, not least keeping calm and dealing with the effects of Covid-19. Whilst our lives in the United Kingdom have been affected one way or another, we are slowly coming out of lockdown and picking up the threads of 'normal' life. However, I know that in many parts of the world the pandemic has not yet peaked and people in Brazil and the USA are still being severely impacted by the virus.



*The Jumbles Reservoir just walking distance from my home has been one of my escape routes over the past few months!*

For many people life will never be quite the same again as their circumstances, family life and possibly employment may have been affected, with the result that many people are re-examining their priorities and deciding what is really important in their lives.

My son is a professional musician with a major orchestra in San Francisco, prior to which he worked in a large London hospital as a respiratory specialist. However, like so many people who have been furloughed, he has reached out in a different direction and gone back to work in a hospital doing research related to the virus until his orchestra is able to start again.

## Blackwork Journey Blog, August 2020

It is good to see that so much research is taking place around the world to try to identify a vaccine and everyone involved deserves our utmost support and respect, as do all the doctors, nurses, health care and many other workers for the tremendous work they are doing to support those affected and their communities often at great personal risk.

### Video conferencing - A new challenge for Blackwork Journey

I know from reading your e-mails and Facebook entries that craft skills and embroidery have played a very important part in coping with the stresses and isolation that has been imposed on all of us. Many of us are in the older age group and this has proved especially challenging as we have self-isolated for months on end.

It will take some time before people are confident enough to resume their lives and contacts in the wider community. However, during the pandemic technology has played a vital role in connecting families and friends. For many people, especially those who live in isolated areas using technology, e-mails, Zoom, Facebook and Skype has been a usual way of life, but for many people this is a new and slightly scary advance.

Nowadays younger people use technology as a normal part of their lives. They are taught to use computers as soon as they start school and growing up with mobile phones, computers, social networking is as normal to them as breathing. For me, it is more of a challenge and when I was asked if I could do a 'Zoom' video talk to the Merseyside Embroiderers Guild (UK) and include a PowerPoint presentation I thought very seriously about whether I could do it?



I have worked with the Merseyside group before and was due to do a day school with them on Islamic architecture and embroidery so I put a presentation together, designed a PDF with information and charts for every member, had a trial run through beforehand (Thanks Michelle and Kim!) and did it.

### ISLAMIC INSPIRATIONS Liz Almond - Blackwork Journey

Explore architecture  
through embroidery!



Projects for you to stitch!

I wanted the people who participated to have some designs that they could work on after the session had finished and when I go back to see them next February we plan to develop it further.

Members also had the chance to show the work they had been doing during the pandemic.

Having spent a very enjoyable session with the members, I really think this way of working has great potential and have already had a number of requests from round the world to do

something similar.

The benefits of reaching out to people in this way are numerous and enable people to come together in a way which has not been possible before. Businesses have held video conferences for years to all parts of the world and given my recent successful experience with Merseyside I see no reason why I cannot work with many more groups around the world this way.

I recently had a call from Judith in Milwaukee USA who is experienced in hosting 'Zoom' video conferencing and she has offered to help organising a pilot scheme, so I have a lot to think about and plan. Thanks Judith, your offer of help is really appreciated! I also had some very valuable advice from members of the Facebook groups who already work this way. For many craft groups who are struggling to survive in the current climate keeping their members together and interested is essential.

We are never too old to learn, it is just a case of confidence!

### **Scarborough Stitches Newsletter**



At the end of the Blog this month you will find a rather special newsletter from a wonderful groups of ladies who did a day school with me earlier in the year on Japanese Kogin embroidery. They have taken everything I taught them and developed it over the past few months and bought it together in a very comprehensive way. I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter as much as I did. I very much look forward to working with them again next year!

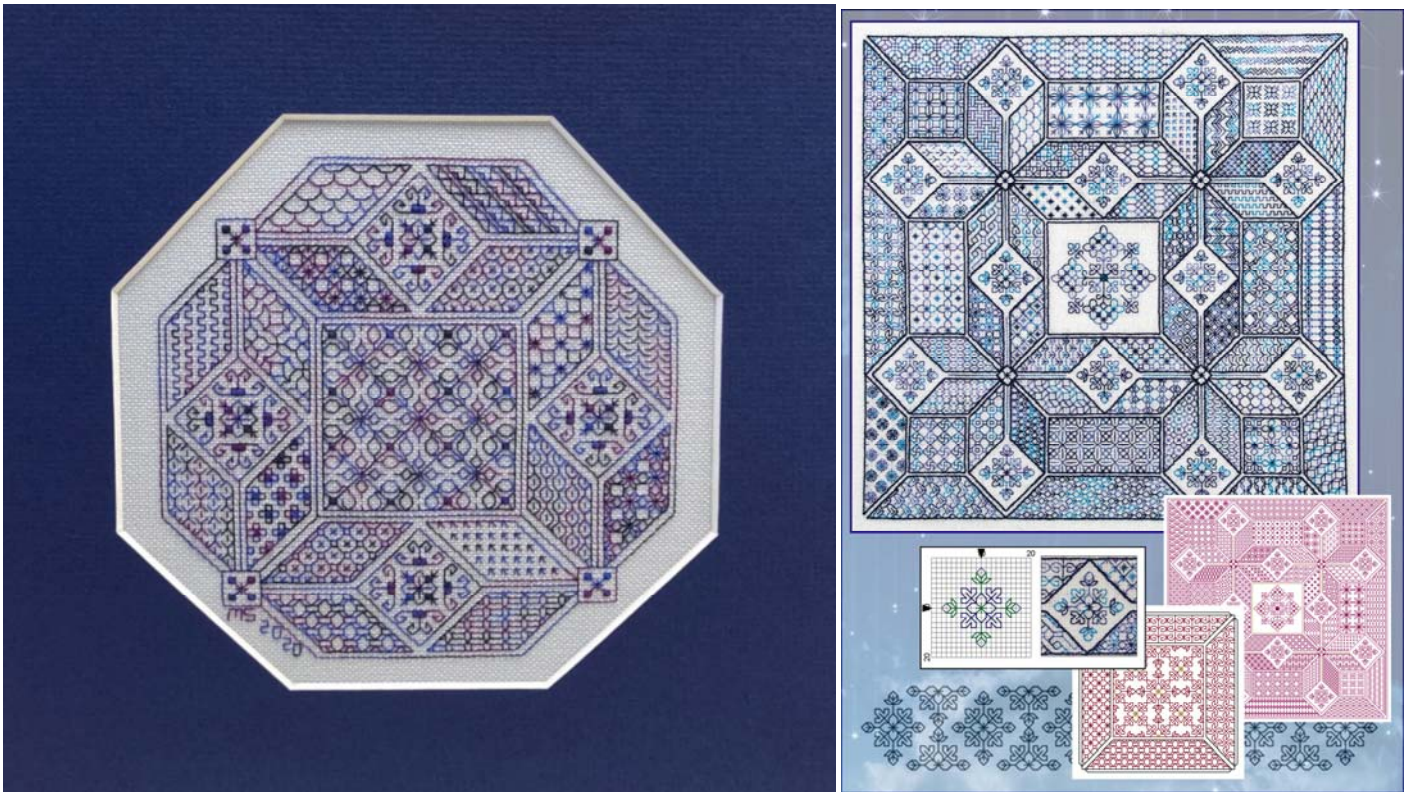
### **Mounts can make all the difference!**

How you display your finished work can make all the difference. It does not have to be expensive or complicated. Card mounts add distance between the frame and the embroidery, but the colour and shape of the mount are important.

What is mount board?

In the picture framing industry, a mount board is a thin, flat piece of coloured card included within a picture frame, which serves as additional decoration and to perform several other, more practical functions such as separating the art from the glass. Also known as Mat Board, each sheet is alkaline-sized and ph neutral. It comes in a range of colours for beginners to professionals. The mount card is usually 1400 Micron thick.

Lacing the embroidery over a piece of mount board serves to protect the embroidery providing a rigid, sturdy backing to keep the embroidery from moving in the frame. Mount board can also be made of foam - often polystyrene with a smooth, sometimes paper-based, face on either side.



*Maureen's extract from CH0334 Shooting Star*

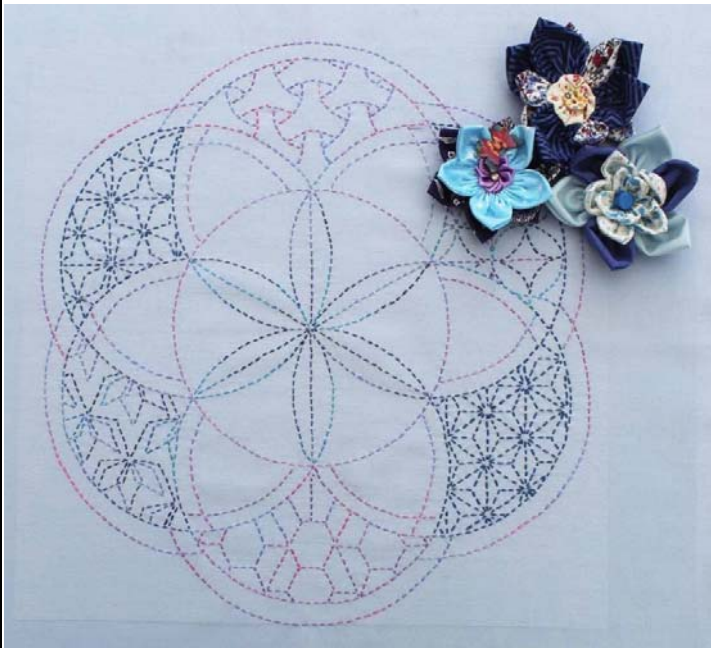
Maureen from Montreal sent me a photograph of an extract she has worked from CH0334 Shooting Star. The mount she has chosen to show off the embroidery is perfect in every way. The shape reflects the embroidery and the colour of the mount enhances her beautiful work.

Whilst you can cut your own mounts, I prefer to have them cut professionally. They are more accurate and have an inside bevelled edge.



This small art nouveau design uses a simple black card mount which acts as a foil to the heavier gold frame.

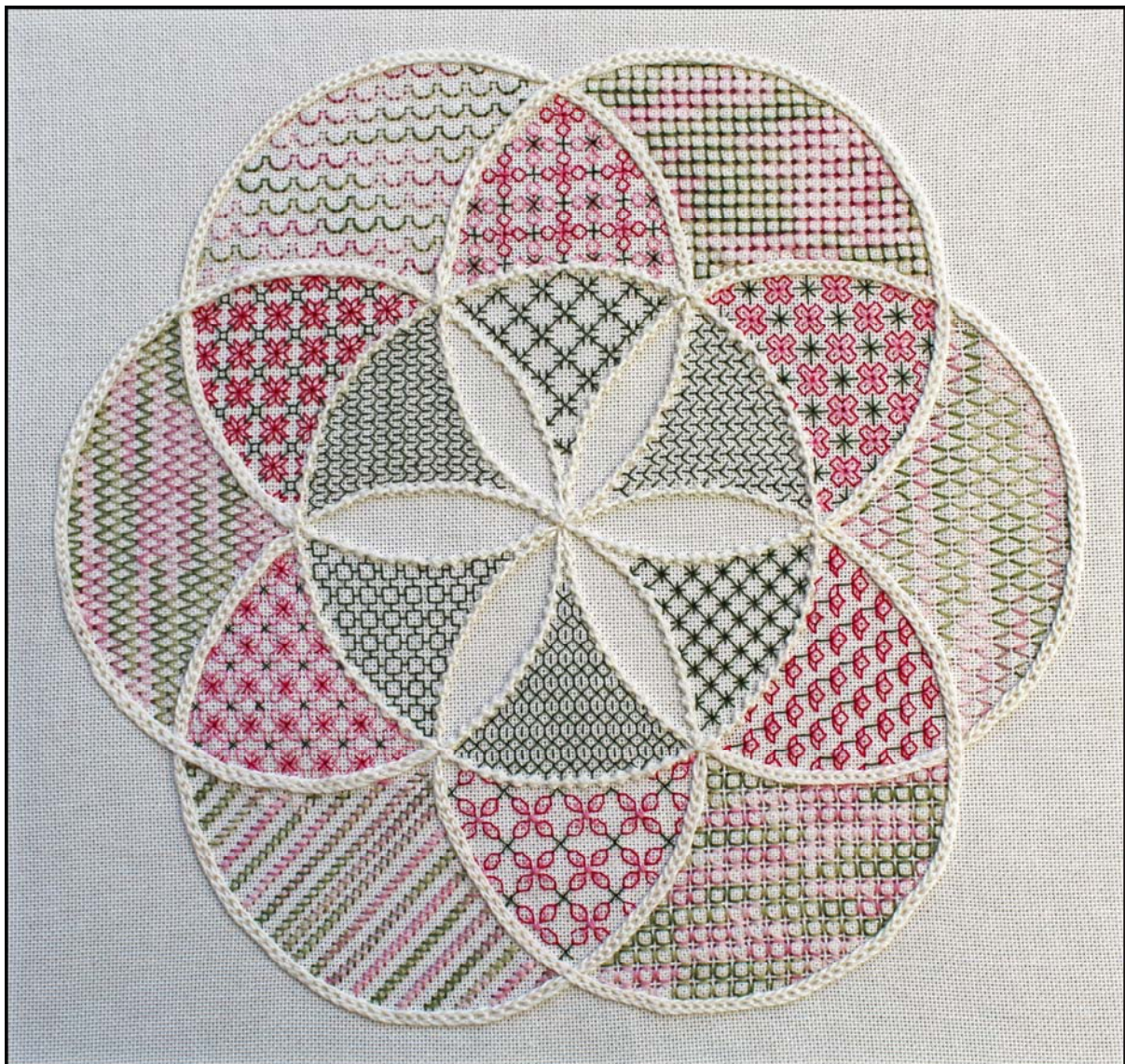
## New designs for August



Two new designs have been added this month - **PR0063 Flower of Life** and **CH0400 Interlocking Circles**.

Flowers of Life is a pulled thread/stitch design. Patterns of seven overlapping circles appear in historical artefacts from the 7th century BC onwards and became a frequent ornament during the Roman Empire period, surviving into medieval artistic traditions both in Islamic (girih decorations) and Gothic art. This design is called "Flower of Life" and is the first one in the Sacred Geometry series.

I experimented by making a small sashiko style tablecloth using the seven circles before embarking on a stitch design in two sizes and different techniques.





*Extract from PR0063 Flower of Life*

### **PR0063 Flower of Life**

**Design area:** 9.50 x 9.50 inches

**Material:** Zweigart 28 count evenweave cream or white, 14 x 14 inches minimum.

Last month in the Blog I featured Hungarian braided chain stitch. I have used this stitch to great effect in the Flower of Life design to separate the different sections

This design was drawn onto Zweigart 28 count evenweave fabric using a water soluble pen. The design is not suitable for Aida embroidery, but it could be drawn onto cotton sateen, linen or cotton and worked as an embroidery using Hungarian braided chain stitch.

There are eighteen pattern areas to be filled of which six are pulled thread work patterns.

### **CH0400 Interlocking Circles**

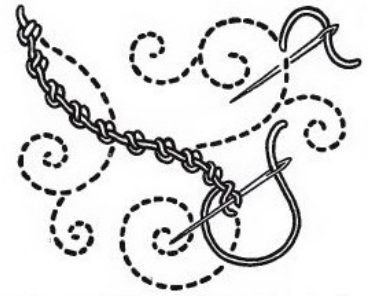
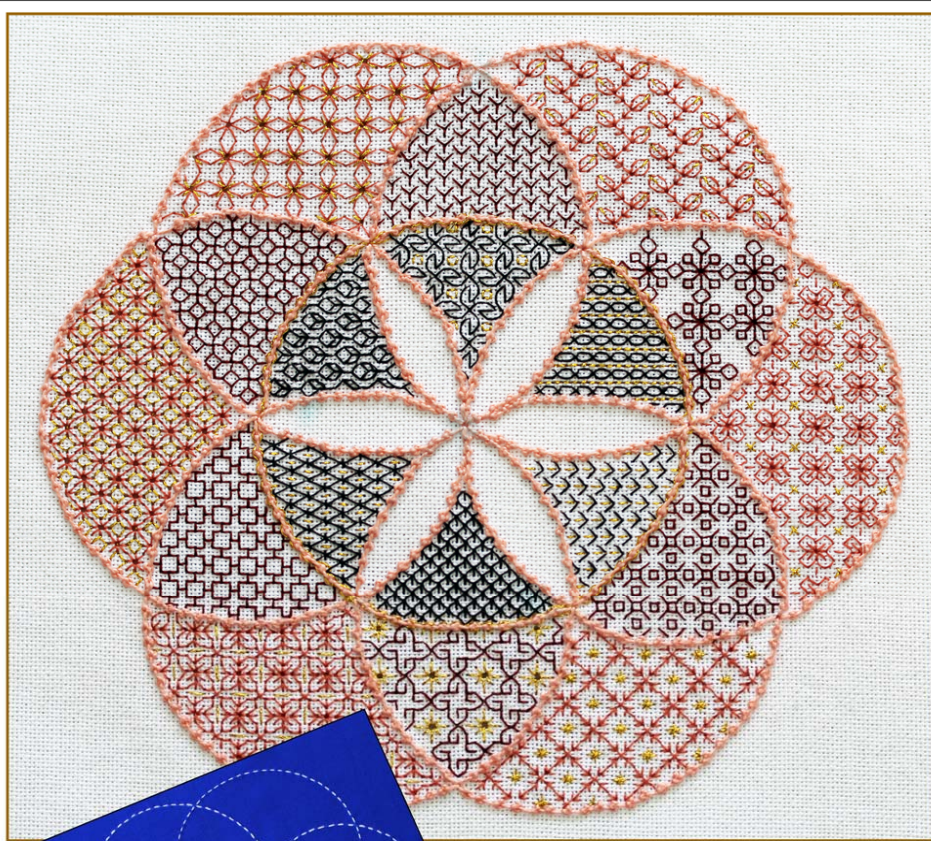
The second design is worked in blackwork and a sashiko pattern has also been included.

**Design Area:** 7.50 x 7.50 inches. If necessary, the design can be enlarged using a photocopier

**Blackwork design:**

**Material:** Zweigart, 28 count evenweave, 12 inches x 12 inches. Note: This design is not suitable for Aida.

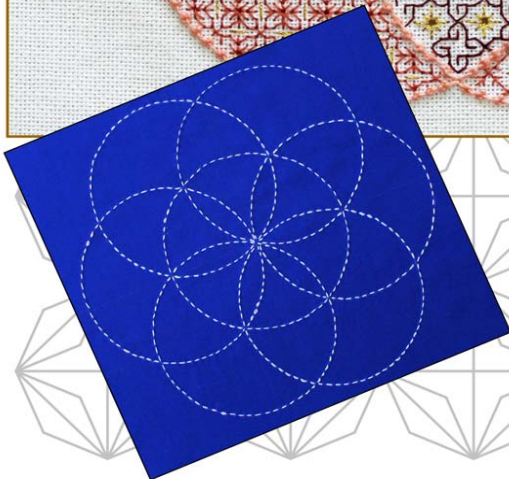
The design has been worked in autumn colours although other colours could be substituted. The outline has been worked in double knot stitch. This gives a textured appearance and is very simple to do.



*Double knot stitch*

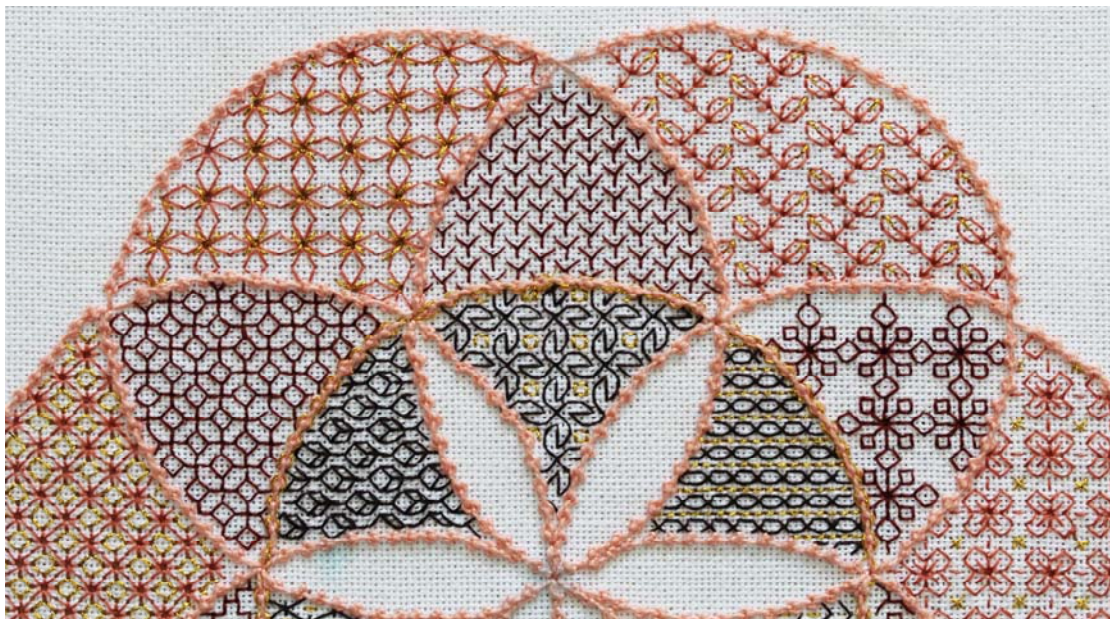
Handy tip:

Whilst a compass and protractor can be used for drawing circular designs, CD's and DVDs are also useful as well as different sized lids from coffee and jam jars etc.



## **Blackwork and Sashiko**

*Extract from CH0400  
Interlocking Circles*





**Another free design!  
FR0183 Embroidered Heart**

This design has been added to Freebies on the Blackwork Journey website to support and encourage everyone who is stitching their way through lockdown.

I have been posting these designs in the Facebook groups which have grown to 9,000 members worldwide and I have been delighted to receive pictures of their work.



If you are interested in joining the closed Facebook groups which I use for teaching, the details are posted below:



Blackwork Journey - Elizabeth Almond Designs

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

Box of Delights Stitch-A-Long. Designs by Elizabeth Almond

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

Pandora's Box - Elizabeth Almond Designs

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/425352680984872/>

Sublime Stitches - Elizabeth Almond Designs

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1695785137378480/#>

Happy stitching and stay safe! *Liz*

# Scarborough Stitchers Newsletter

Newsletter 15

3 July 2020

## Liz Almond

Hello everyone! This is a wonderful edition of our newsletter dedicated to Kogin. Most of us had never heard of it, or the wonderful teacher Liz Almond, until she taught a workshop at the Ryedale E G , and members came back so enthusiastic. Liz's friendliness, generosity and skill in black work and counted thread work as well as this new technique, Kogin, had struck such a chord we had to invite her to come to our group too! The exhibition she and her lovely husband George set up was inspiring, and all the charts we could take home with us..... well - It was a memorable Saturday!! Enjoy the newsletter, and thanks again to Jenny.

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## Lis Stenhouse

This is the learning kit you gave us, and I used beads to bring some colour and liveliness to it. I have just stretched it on a pink fabric, so it isn't useful - just decorative!

# Scarborough Stitchers Newsletter

Newsletter 15

3 July 2020

**Lis Stenhouse**

Lis did this piece using petite beads after admiring a warrior from the East that Liz Almond had done and this design idea came from his breastplate. Lis thinks hers is now more like a church window!

Warrior?

Or

Church Window?



# Scarborough Stitchers Newsletter

Newsletter 15

3 July 2020

## Lis Stenhouse

I enjoyed this corner design so much I decided to fill the other corner with a similar style, using beads and a variety of complementary stitches.

It sits happily on a plain card!



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## Margaret Ward



I'm afraid I've done very little stitching but thought I'd forward the attached photos of a little coin purse I've done, lined with pretty Liberty fabric.



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3 July 2020

## Wendy Normington

Wendy struggled with her counting (but she was not the only one) and the finished article was well worth the effort.



# Scarborough Stitchers Newsletter

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3 July 2020

## Maureen Boyes

This is what I made using 'LizAlmond' design when we had her workshop.

It is a Japanese bag with a needle case, pin keep and scissor pocket which fit inside. The bag is closed by the Japanese button which I also made.

I also made the small folder and the buttons, which I enjoyed.

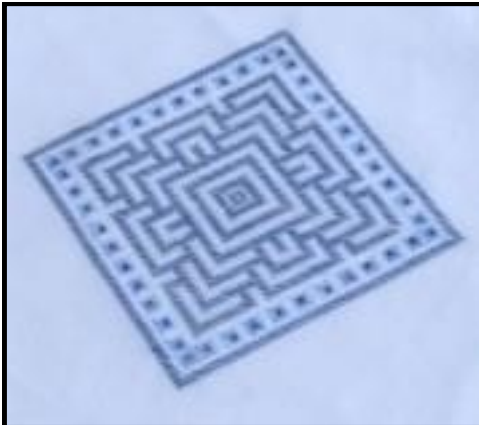


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**Pam Kilner**



This piece was stitched by Pam at the class and finished at our meetings afterwards.

She then stitched the sampler from a pattern by Liz Almond



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## Maureen Burks

Maureen decided to make her Kogin piece into a cover for her floor-standing magnifying glass.



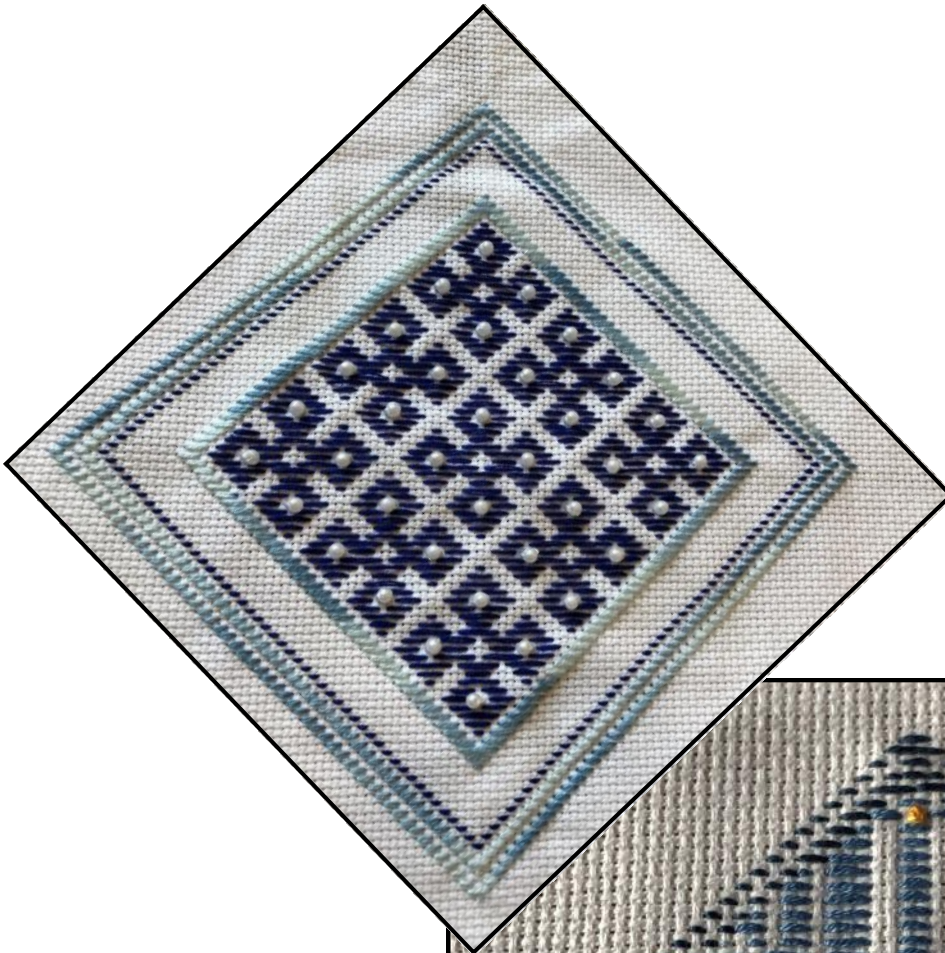


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Jenny Gospel



Jenny has finished sewing her pieces but has still to make them up.

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3 July 2020

## Margaret Germaine

The close-up images from Jenny G. and Margaret G. show the originality of the Kogin style to great effect.



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Val Hobson



Val could not attend the class unfortunately but she has embroidered this piece from one of Liz Almond's patterns

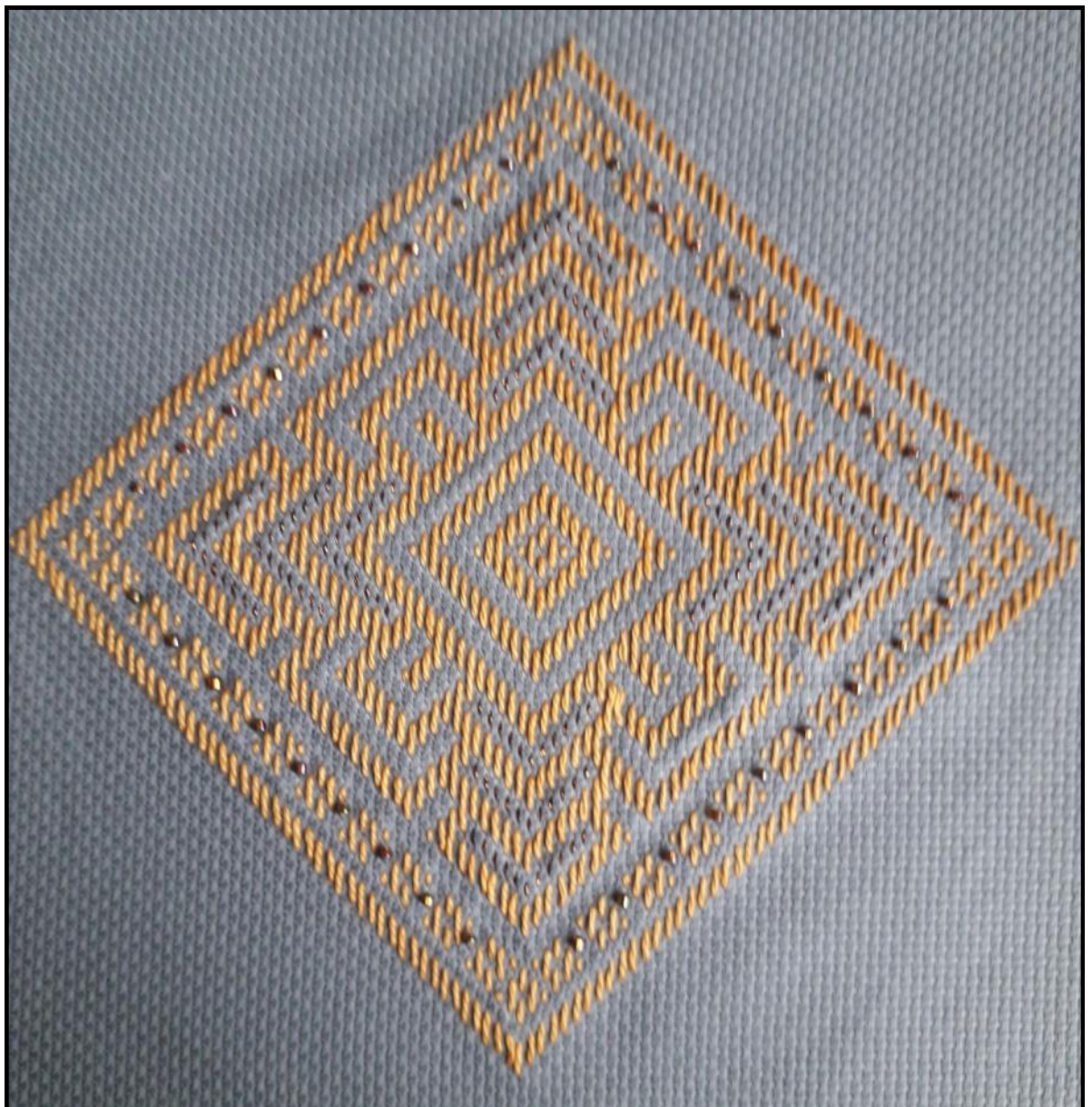
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**Linda Newby**

The choice of this vibrant golden colour on the Aida drew admiration and compliments from us all as Linda stitched her piece



# Scarborough Stitchers Newsletter

Newsletter 15

3 July 2020

Jenny Harper



I turned the class piece into a decoration for a cotton shopping bag for my sister's birthday. She visits the USA frequently to visit her daughter's family and I thought the red/white and blue would suit.

The Christmas card was my Secret Santa card for our group.

