



Blackwork Journey Blog

October 2016

**New E-Book, Charts
& features to
explore!**



Blackwork Journey

E-Book 7

**Introduction
to
Pulled thread work**

**16 Stitches, charts &
photographs**

Blackwork Journey Blog, October 2016

September has been a very busy month with a visit from three Canadian friends who are all interested in embroidery. Maureen is a member of the EAC in Lakeshore, Ontario and we met when I visited the Guild in 2014. She is full of ideas and very enthusiastic about all areas of embroidery, especially pulled thread work and blackwork and it is really interesting to share ideas, look back on shared projects and explore future ideas. As a designer, I spend long hours in my studio on my own and I benefit from working with like-minded people and exploring new avenues.

The Facebook groups provide an opportunity for members to share their ideas and post their work in progress and this benefits both new and experienced embroiderers and can be accessed through the Blackwork Journey website.

We have many talented readers in the groups and over the years they have won numerous prizes at County and National shows.

Our latest 'Star' is Rosemarie who won First Prize for the most outstanding exhibit in the Central Midlands Agricultural Society Show in Australia. To see 'Save the Stitches' so beautifully presented with its embroidered border was an absolute delight! So thank you Rosemarie for sharing your news and well done!



Rosemarie's embroidered border and drawn thread edging add the finishing touch!

'Save the Stitches' can be found in Freebies and as an E-Book in Blackwork Journey





FR0128 Spring Clean stitched by Jacqui

Last month I posted a chart called 'Spring Clean' in Freebies and Jacqui G stitched it for her friend. A number of readers asked which threads she used? Jacqui has used a hand dyed variegated thread by Joyri Designs called Winter Solstice alongside DMC 3052, 807 and 310. Whilst I am not a fan of spiders, this one was rather appropriate!



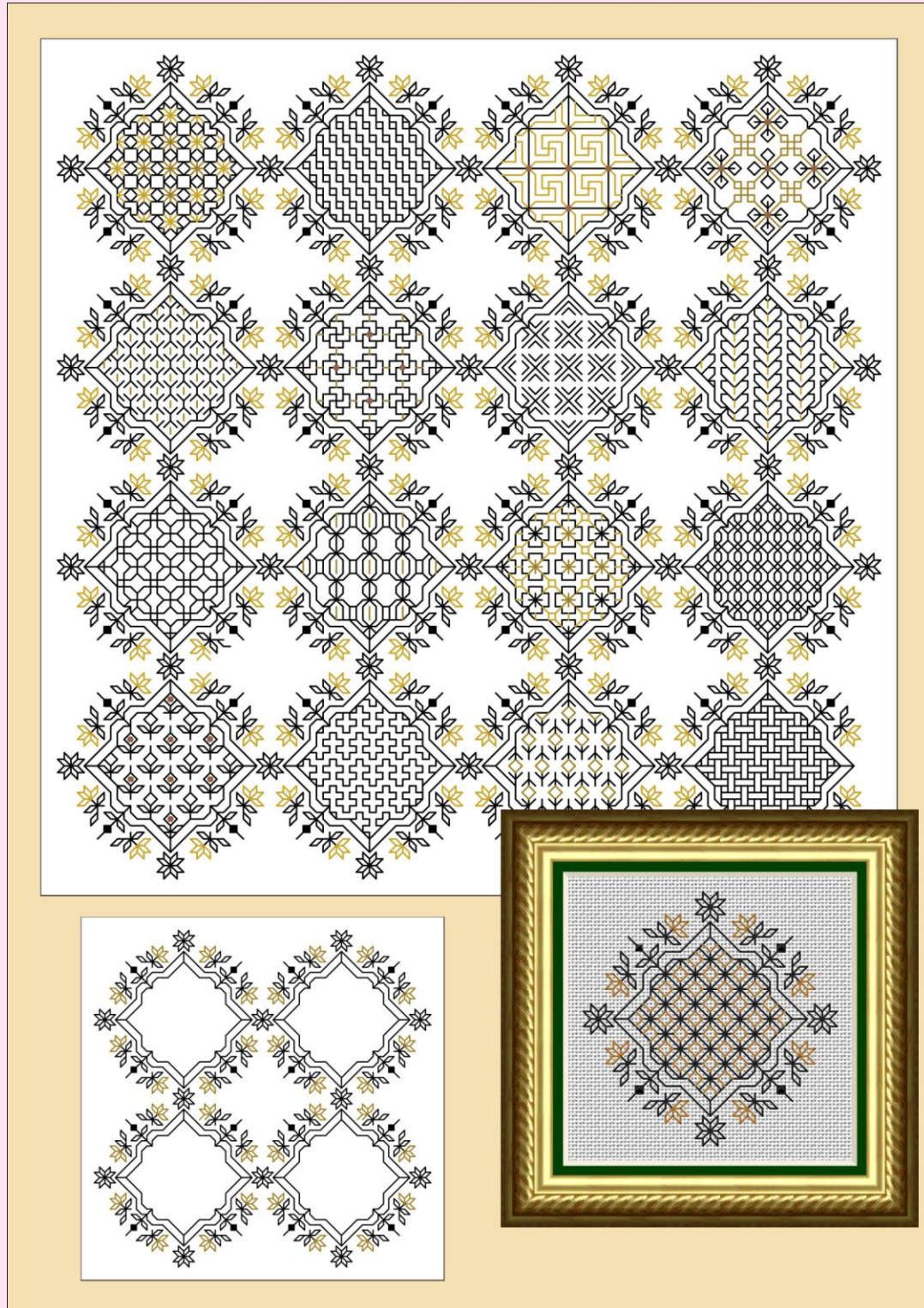
'Just Cross Stitch' Christmas Ornaments 2016 is also available as a digital download.

I always know that Christmas is coming when the magazines produce their Christmas issues in September, but I do get concerned when I discover an ornament I designed in the magazine and couldn't remember stitching it!



New design for Christmas - CH0346 Elegance

I am always looking for new Christmas ideas for simple gifts, cards or table linen and so have developed the idea behind 'Box of Delights' a little further. I like the basic shape and wanted to build on it to produce a rich design which uses metallic threads and beads, but was also practical, hence *CH0346 Elegance*.



CH0346 Elegance

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This design can be used for:

A 16, 9 or 4 block sampler, 12 Christmas ornaments or, join the motifs together for table linen, placemats, napkins or individual handmade cards which are always appreciated.

Select the fillers patterns you most enjoy stitching or use them all in the 16 motif sampler. The leaf and flower border links all the motifs together.

Use short lengths of metallic thread to reduce fraying. Kreinik , DMC Diamant, and Rainbow Gallery Petite Treasure Braids No 4 are the ones that I use most frequently, but there are other manufacturers.

Kreinik

The following metallic threads are available for use in many different projects. The one I find most suitable for blackwork and counted thread work is the **Very Fine (#4) Braid**. The thread is sold on a reel and is used straight from the reel.



Japan #1 (couching, backstitching), fine Japan #5 (surface embroidery), and larger Japan #7 (surface embroidery). Couch Japan #5 and #7 with Japan #1

Kreinik Cord, or silk thread. Kreinik Cable™: 3-ply twisted cord resembling a real metal thread for surface embroidery or sampler-style stitches.

Kreinik Braids™: Used as a single strand in all stitches. Five weights: Very Fine #4, Fine #8, Tapestry #12, Medium #16, Canvas #24, Heavy #32. Comes in different looks: Basic, Hi Lustre, Vintage, Fluorescent, Holographic, Corded.

DMC Diamant



DMC's new Diamant thread is available in 6 rich metallic shades and is easy to use in many cross stitch and embroidery projects.

Diamant thread comes in 6 different colours:-

Light Gold, Gold, Gold and Black , Light Silver, Silver , Copper

Length: 35m Spool

Composition: 72% Viscose & 28% Metallised Polyester D140: 89% Rayon & 11% metallised polyester

One of my favourite metallic threads is Rainbow Gallery Treasure Braids No's 4 & 8

Suitable for evenweave and Aida

Cross stitch: 14 to 22count

Needlepoint: 18 to 26 count

Treasure Braid is a shiny metallic that comes in size #4 and #8. All are braided and will not unravel as you stitch. It is very durable and can be used in longer lengths. It is a soft metallic and covers the canvas well. Size 4 is a good substitute for several plies of blending filament.

Size 8 is twice the size of the 4 and is available in several colors that include High Gloss and Shimmer Colours.



Rainbow Gallery Petite Treasure Braid PB01 Bright Gold 25 yards per card is the one I use most from the range and is the one I am using for the new design 'Subtle Stitches'.

All of the manufacturers have shade cards which you can download.

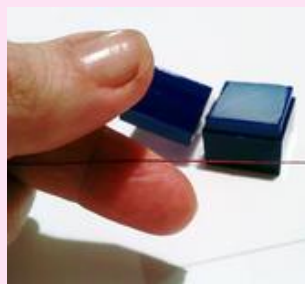
Working with metallic thread

Metallic thread is not the easiest thread to use, but these tips will help:

1. Use a shorter length than normal and pull the thread gently through the cloth.

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2. If you are using two strands such as DMC Light Effects or Kreinik, thread the needle by making a loop and pass the loop through the eye of the needle. Take the loop over the tip of the needle, then pull the thread to form a knot at the eye of the needle.
3. Metallic threads are springy and will slip unless they are secured firmly, so leave a longer 'tail' than usual and work it into the stitches carefully in the back of the work.
4. Using a needle one size larger than usual will reduce the friction on the thread as it passes through the material.
5. Let the needle 'hang' to prevent it twisting and if necessary, use a product such as Thread Heaven.



Using your thumb or forefinger, press one end of a length of thread into the conditioner and pull it across. Use enough pressure to embed the thread as you pull it through so that it is coated on all surfaces!

Use Thread Heaven sparingly!

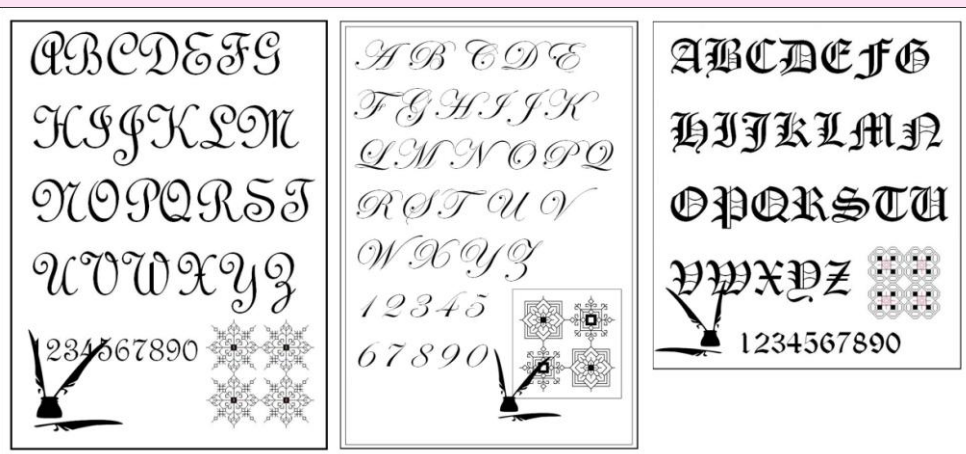
Thread Heaven

Whitework for Weddings

PR0036 Ring Pillows - two designs including alphabet

I really enjoy stitching white embroidery on white and especially working with thicker threads than usual. I enjoy creating new designs and adding texture and have been working on a new series of embroidered designs for some time. However, when a number of people approached me recently and asked if I could design a ring pillow for Spring weddings, I bought my whitework designs forward and have added the first one here.

These designs can be used for many other occasions from special birthdays to christenings and confirmations. Mounted as a picture or made into a cushion, the designs can be enlarged or reduced in size using a photocopier. Adding colour to match a specific room makes them a practical addition for any needlewoman. A full size alphabet and numbers have also been included along with instructions on creating your own letters using your computer.



A number of different alphabets are included in Charts.

These are just three which I find useful:

CH0283 French Script
CH0285 Edwardian
CH0282 Old English



PR0036 Two ring pillow designs



Blackwork Journey

E-Book 7

Introduction to Pulled thread work

16 Stitches, charts & photographs

New for October - E-Book 7 Introduction to Pulled thread work

There has been considerable interest in the technique of pulled thread work and whilst there are a number of designs in the 'Projects' section, it seemed appropriate to write an E-Book which combines stitch instructions for 16 different stitches and projects in a 44 page book.

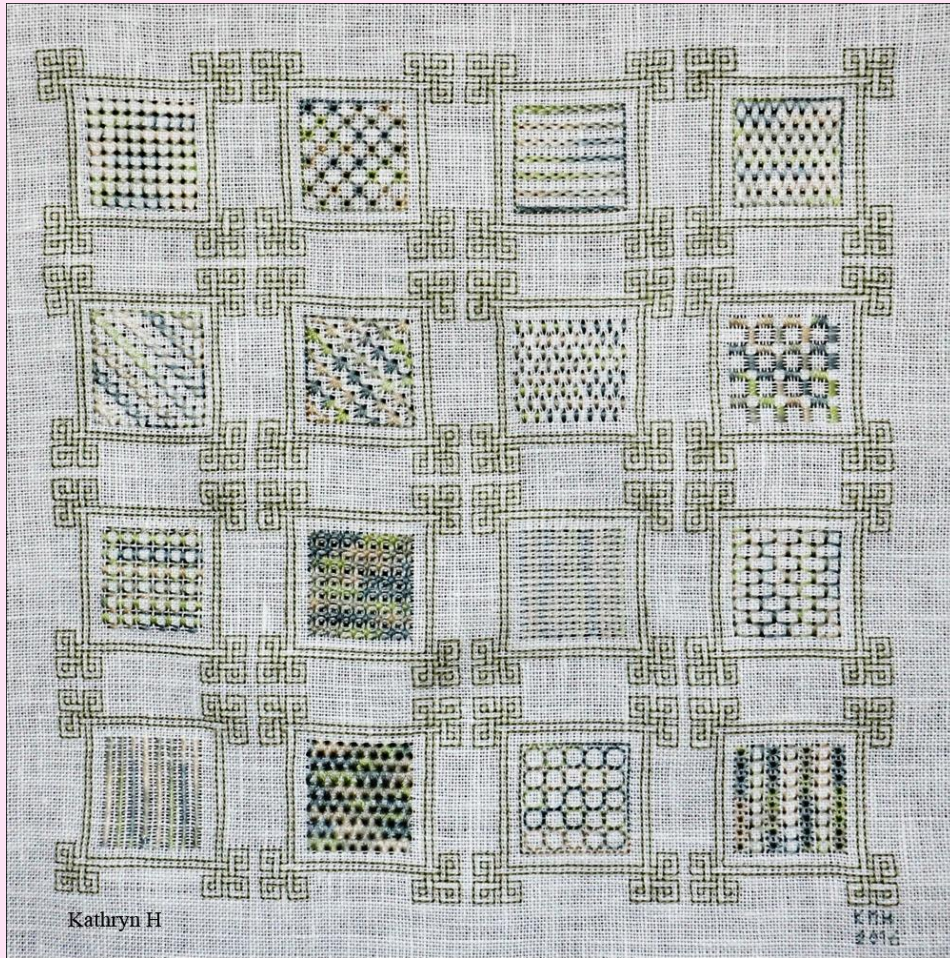
It includes:

Introduction to pulled thread work, materials and threads

16 Mini Motif designs and four different chart sizes

List of 16 pulled thread work stitches and charts, examples and photographs

Full size 16 motif Pulled thread work Sampler with instructions and photographs.



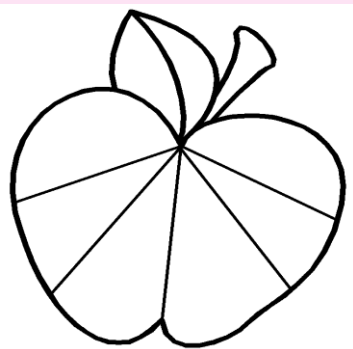
16 motif sampler embroidered by Kathryn in variegated threads on linen

A number of members of the Facebook group embroidered the designs and I have included some of their work in the book.

'Apple for the Teacher' - folded paper into embroidery

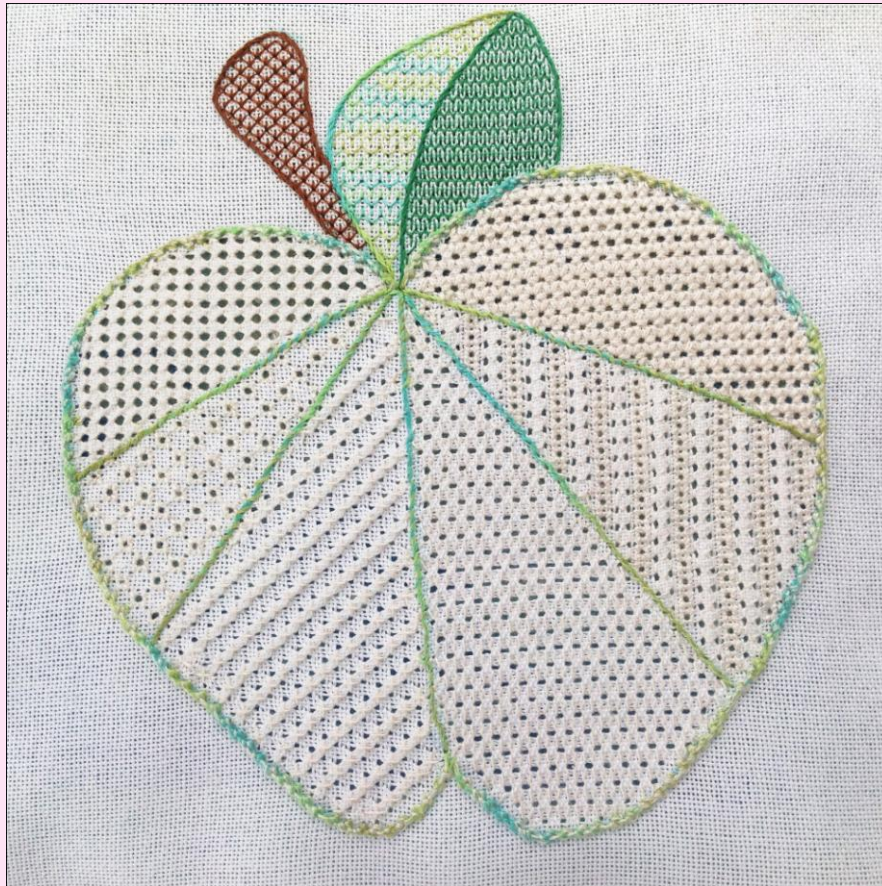
Following on from my August Blog where I added some shapes which could be divided and filled with embroidery, just for fun, I designed a freestyle 'Apple for the Teacher' in three different sizes and nine pattern areas.

Having decided where the divisions should be and the number of areas to be filled, the next point to be considered was the technique or techniques, to be used to fill the design. The apple could either be a blackwork design, a pulled thread work pattern, an embroidery design or a combination of all three.



I decided to stitch three different apples as stitch samplers ranging in size from cushions to cards. The largest one is a pulled thread design with blackwork leaf and stem. The others? well watch this space....

Take a shape, divide it into sections and add the chosen stitches



'Apple for the Teacher'

'Apple for the Teacher' consists of six pulled thread work areas and three blackwork filler or 'diaper' patterns. The design areas are large enough to display the stitches. Like all new stitches, I suggest you practice them first on the doodle cloth before working on the main project.



Maureen's 'doodle' cloth

Maureen's 'doodle' cloth is well organised and methodical!

Maureen's 'doodle' cloth is an excellent example of pulled thread stitches worked in neutral and coloured threads. Working in colour produces very different effects and this cloth shows how important it is to consider how you want your design to appear.

The pulled thread work in 'Pandora's Box' has been worked in many different colour combinations on many different coloured fabrics. Choosing the wrong colour and not trying out the stitches first can lead to a lot of frustration and much unpicking! Learning how to stitch the different pulled thread work stitches in the design adds a new technique to the embroiderer's library and is fun to stitch!

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.

October's 'Stitch of the month' The Wheat-ear stitch

This simple but practical stitch can be used as a line design or to create ears of wheat. Because the thread passes under the two diagonal lines it is slightly raised. Use a chunky white thread for ears of wheat which are characteristic of Irish Mountmellick embroidery.

Wheatear stitch worked on a canvas bag

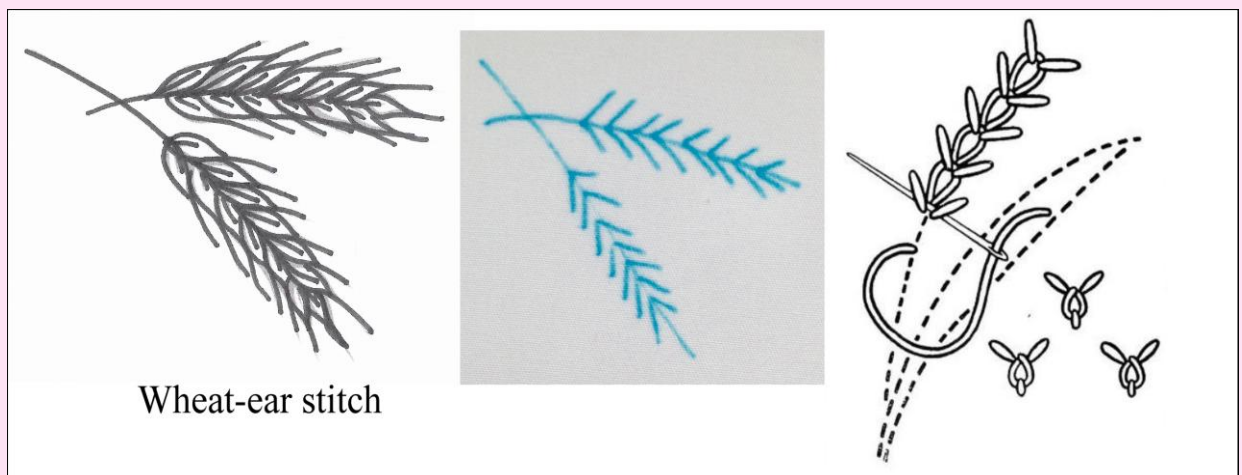


Method:

If working a wheat ear, add a straight stitch at the top of the line first.

1. Start at the top of the line and work downwards. Work 2 straight stitches at an angle to each other, then bring the needle through lower down the line.
2. Slide the thread under the base of the two single stitches, taking the needle back to where it emerged. This forms a

chain loop and completes the stitch.
3. Repeat the sequence.



Wheat-ear stitch

Embroidered Bodice 1630 - 40

Platt Hall Gallery of Costume, Manchester, UK

In the dim recesses of Platt Hall lies an embroidered treasure dating from the 1600's. Shown from the back, the bodice of white linen is embroidered over the whole ground in silver thread chain-stitch and metal spangles in a formal scrolling design.



It has a low round neck and large full sleeves which were characteristic of the 1630's as was the high waistline. This loose style of bodice would have been worn over stays with a separate full skirt.

Happy stitching!

Liz