



# *Blackwork Journey Blog*

July 2019



Music designs  
for embroidery



Picture, box top or pincushion  
scissor 1



May and June have been very complicated months as many of my Facebook members know, because of an unexpected trip to San Francisco as our son was taken seriously ill. However, I am pleased to say that he is now slowly recovering and resuming a normal life. It certainly demonstrated how difficult it can be when family members are half way round the world and you need to be with them very quickly.

The support that we received from our friends and readers was really appreciated and to know that so many people have been thinking of us really helped, so thank you very much!



This year, I have worked with many classes round the UK most of whom I have visited before for different courses and it is always a pleasure to meet them and see their finished projects. Just recently, for example, I was really excited when I visited Rochdale Embroiderers Guild to see that one of the members had made a jacket embellished with Japanese Kogin embroidery for a wedding.

Jillian used a linen furnishing fabric to create this simple, but very stylish jacket.

### *Jillian's Kogin Jacket*

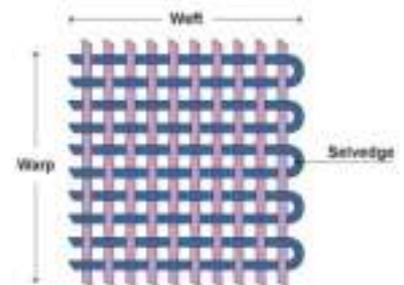
If you are planning to make your own garment choose a very simple pattern and make a toile first before embarking on your embroidery. Planning and counting how your embroidery fits onto the pattern is time consuming, but necessary. If the warp and the weft are not the same then the diamonds will be more elongated, so always work a sample of the embroidery on the chosen fabric first. A toile is a version of the finished garment made in cheap material so that the design can be fitted and altered.

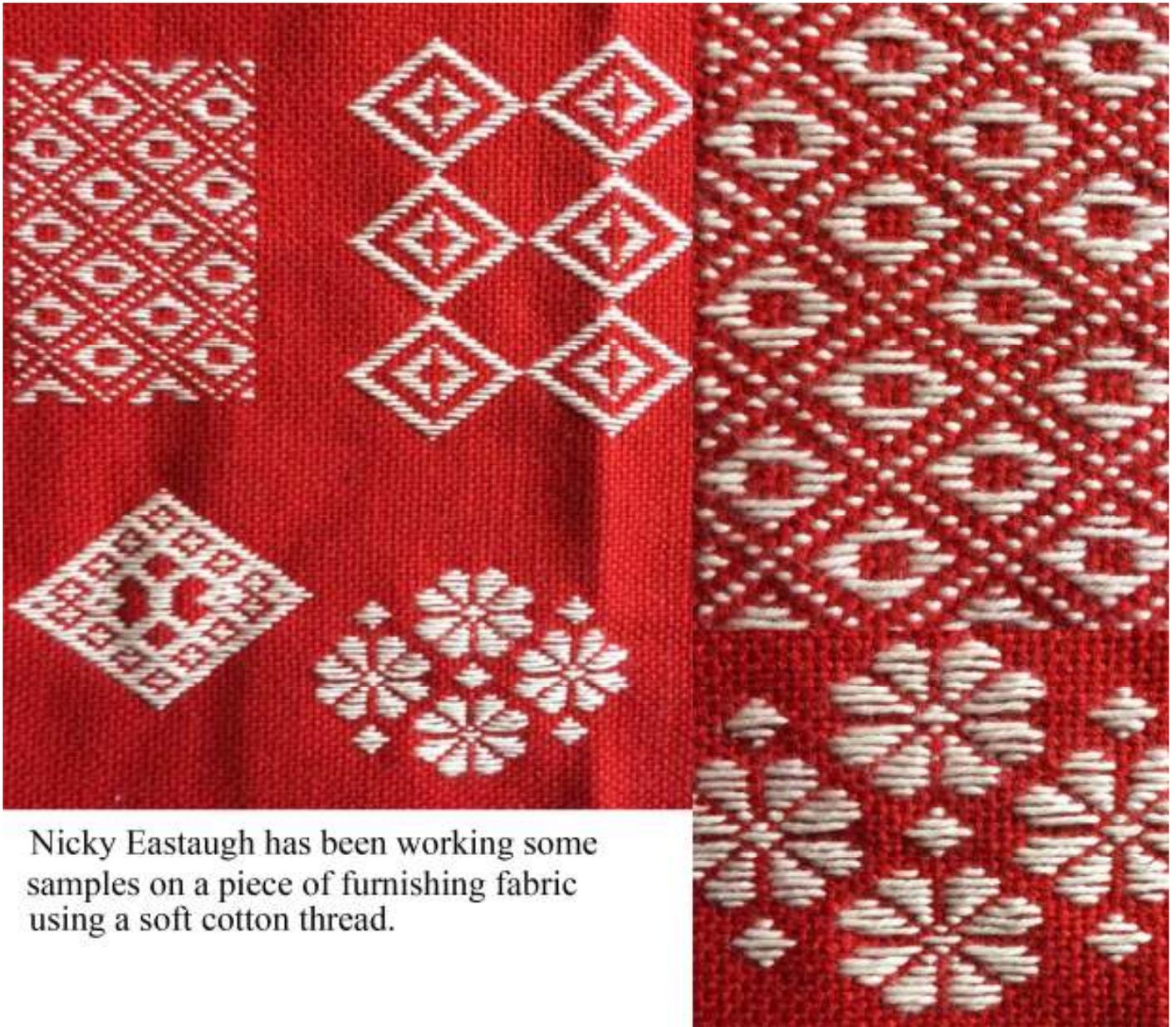


### *Fabric construction*

Japanese Kogin embroidery is always worked horizontally in lines along the weft of the fabric, turning the work at the end of each row.

In fabric construction, the weft refers to the horizontal lines and the warp refers to the vertical lines on the fabric. The edge is called the selvage.



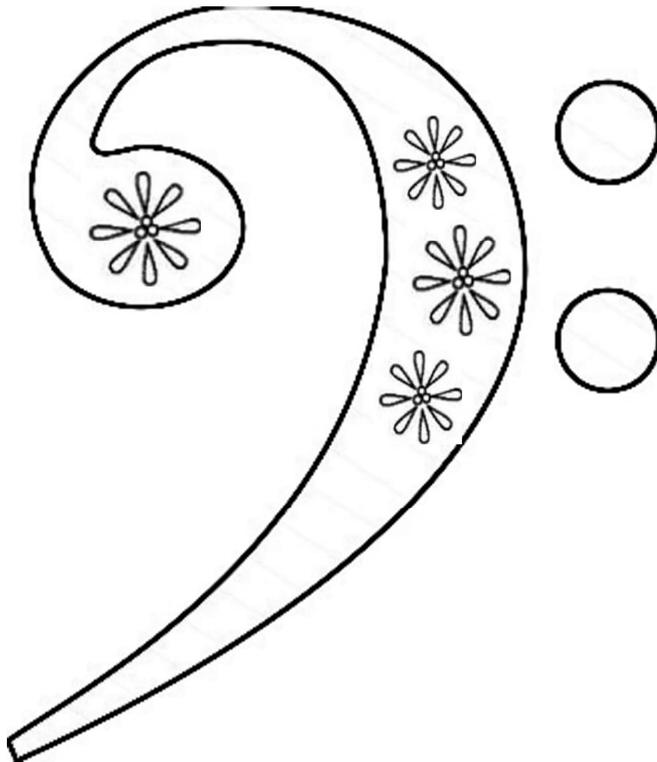


Nicky Eastaugh has been working some samples on a piece of furnishing fabric using a soft cotton thread.

I took some furnishing fabric to a class recently and Nicky worked some examples of Kogin patterns on this evenweave woollen fabric. The fabric would work well for a winter waistcoat, but may be too thick for a jacket. When I find exactly the right fabric I intend to make my own jacket and waistcoat in Kogin embroidery using a cream furnishing linen.

### **Music, music music!**

Earlier in the year, I added a series of music designs to Blackwork Journey, but did not add a design for a Bass clef. Janet, one of our readers, asked me if I could prepare a design for her and it occurred to me that there might be other readers who would like the design. This very simple design can be worked on a medium weight fabric such as linen, calico or an evenweave fabric such as Zweigart 28 count evenweave,



**Bass Clef** - Make a special decoration using knots on stalks for the lazy daisy flowers.

**Design Area:** 4 x 6 inches

**Material:** Zweigart 28 count evenweave, 6 x 8 inches. Enlarge the design using a photocopier if required.

**Threads:**

DMC stranded cotton DMC 310 black, one skein. Select suitable colour for flowers DMC Light Effects metallic gold, one skein

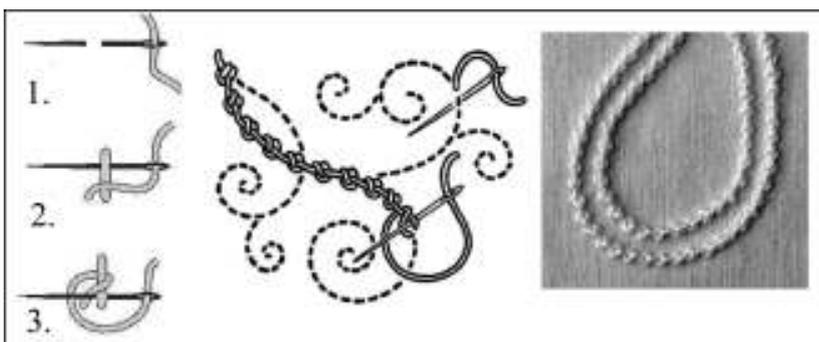
**Stitches used:**

Double knot stitch for outline, three strands  
Knots on stalks for flowers, two strands.  
Back stitch whipped, two strands, whip with gold

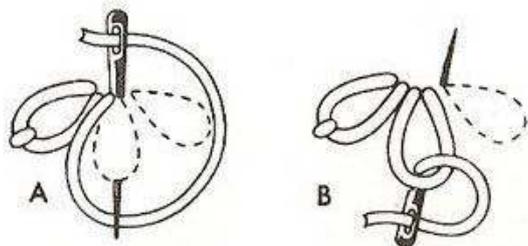
**Method:**

Draw the design lightly onto the fabric using an HB pencil or a water-soluble pen.

1. Embroider the outside of the bass clef in DMC 310 using double knot stitch. Back stitch the inner side in two strands of black and whip with metallic gold.
2. Add the flowers in either lazy daisy stitch or knots on stalks, three strands.
3. Add a bead to the centre of each flower.
4. Place the finished design face down on a soft towel and press lightly.



Double knot stitch makes an attractive textured outline stitch. Space the knots carefully allowing sufficient space between each stitch.



Do not underestimate the humble lazy daisy stitch! It is a simple, practical flower shape. Add a stitch to the centre in metallic thread or a bugle bead for added texture. Work in chunky threads or two strands of floss, the choice is yours.



Combine different thicknesses of threads together with knots and beads to add texture and interest to a simple flower and leaf spray. Many of the embroidery stitches we use daily look very different when worked in thicker threads so why not explore your stash and bring out the thicker threads and experiment with them. The Base clef would be a very simple design to practice on and the simple embroidery could become a stitch sampler.

If you are interested in the previous music designs in Blackwork Journey they are:  
PR0041 Music Magic and PR0044 Cleftastique which can be found in 'Projects' on the website.



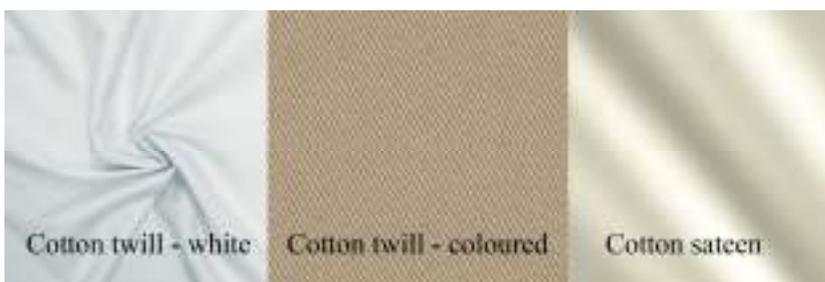
*PR0041 Music Magic and PR0044 Cleftastique*

**Which fabrics do you use for your free style embroidery and why have you chosen them?**

I was recently asked if I have any favourite fabrics that I use for free style embroidery and why have I chosen them? I thought about it for a while and realised that I return to the same fabrics again and again when I am drawing designs onto fabric for embroidery.

If I am working a design where the embroidery will be flat rather than textured I use a medium weight white or antique white cotton. There is no slub in the fabric to detract from the stitching, it washes well and presses easily. It is reasonably priced and widely available.

When I am working whitework mountmellick designs a different type of fabric is required. Mountmellick embroidery is heavily stitched with thicker threads. It requires a firm white matt cotton sateen or white cotton drill which is smooth on one side and twill on the reverse.

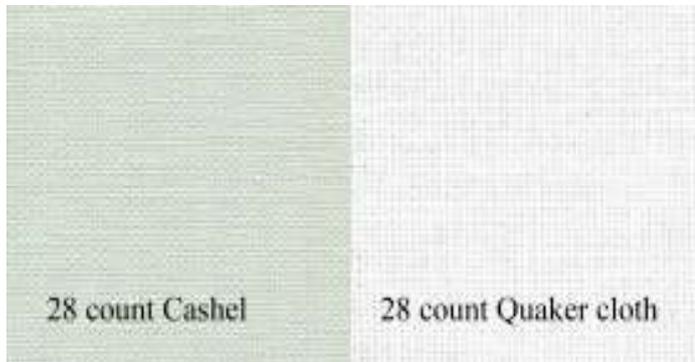


The embroidery is worked on the smooth side of the fabric. The fabric needs to be heavy enough to support the weight of the stitching and to withstand frequent washing which white embroidery on white requires.

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Pre-wash the material before drawing on the design with either a water soluble pen or an HB pencil.

Note: Cotton sateen is a finely woven fabric with a satin-like texture and sheen. You may be able to find it in quilt shops or curtain material shops. It may shrink up to 6% and may be machine washable.



I am wary about using linen because it can be difficult to iron and creases easily. It may also have a very open appearance and the surface may not be smooth enough for the piece that I am working.

However, if you do want to work on linen the **Zweigart Cashel linen** is 100% pure linen evenweave fabric with a fine stitch count. This fabric is woven with a high quality linen fibre making it a beautiful fabric to work on and perfect

for hemstitching, fine cross stitch samplers, blackwork & drawn thread work. It comes in a good range of colours and is widely available.

Zweigart also make a 28 count **Quaker cloth** which is 55% linen & 45% cotton. The linen/cotton combination makes this fabric easier to handle. The threads are very even and therefore easier to count than 100% linen.

**Calico** - a very practical fabric for surface embroidery.



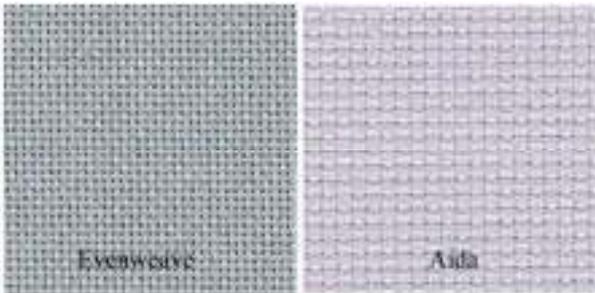
As discussed last month, I enjoy working on calico although it does crease easily. Pre-wash the fabric before drawing the design onto the fabric to remove any dressing. Be aware that it will shrink, so allow extra width if planning a large project.

*Bands of textured embroidery stitches have been used to create this calico cushion. Guipure lace and beads have also been added.*





*Extract from calico cushion worked in a variety of threads from floss to crochet cotton!*



### **Evenweave and Aida fabrics**

The majority of my work uses counted thread techniques, so a suitable fabric depends on the technique I am using. There are two different types of counted thread fabrics commonly available which every needlewoman is familiar with, namely evenweave and Aida blockweave.

They come in a variety of different counts i.e. Threads, or blocks to the inch and experience will determine which one it is preferable to work on.

However, if you are new to embroidery counting blocks is easier than counting threads and Aida makes a good fabric to start counted thread work, progressing to evenweave when you are more confident. Many people never move on to evenweave fabrics and produce equally beautiful projects. Always choose a good quality fabric to work on as the cheaper products may not handle as well and are not always the count that they say they are, thus distorting the finished embroidery.

I always use Zweigart fabrics where possible and as I have got older and my eyesight has deteriorated, I frequently work on Zweigart 25 count Lugana which is easier to see and a delight to work with.

Note: Evenweave stitches are usually worked over two threads unless the pattern states otherwise whereas Aida is worked over one block.

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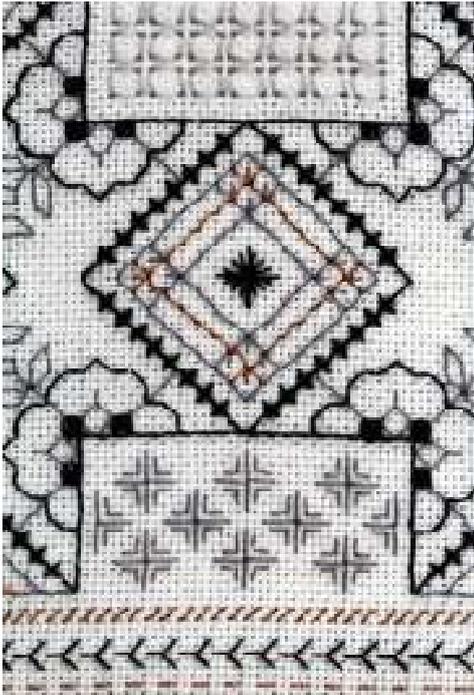
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### A quick reference guide to Zweigart embroidery fabrics:

The higher the stitch count per inch the finer the fabric will be. 14, 16 and 18 count Aida blockweave is the most commonly used. 25, 28 and 32 count cotton and linen are the most widely used evenweave fabrics.

<b>COTTON</b>	<b>LINEN</b>	<b>AIDA</b>
18 Count Davosa	18 Count Floba	8 Count Aida
20 Count Bellana	20 Count Cork Linen	11 Count Aida
20 Count Bellana Couture	25 Count Dublin Linen	14 Count Aida
20 Count Bellana Lurex	25 Count Floba	14 Count Aida - Easy Count
22 Count Fine Ariosa	28 Count Cashel - Vintage	14 Count Aida - Lurex
25 Count Colmar	28 Count Cashel Linen	14 Count Aida - Rustico
25 Count Lugana	28 Count Quaker Cloth	14 Count Aida - Vintage
25 Count Lugana - Vintage	30 count Linen Band	14 Count Aida - Yorkshire
27 Count Linda	32 Count Belfast - Dots	16 Count Aida
28 Count Brittney	32 Count Belfast - Vintage	16 Count Aida - Rustico
28 Count Brittney - Lurex	32 Count Belfast Linen	18 Count Aida
28 count Trentino	32 Count Floba	18 Count Aida - Lurex
28 Count Trento	35 Count Floba	18 Count Aida - Rustico
32 Count Lucan	36 Count Edinburgh Linen	18 Count Aida - Vintage
32 Count Murano	40 Count Newcastle Linen	20 Count Aida
32 Count Murano - Vintage	55 Count Kingston Linen	20 Count Aida - Easy Count
40 Count Verdal		6 Count Binca
		22 Count Hardanger
		3.5 Count Turkestan

### FABRIC COUNT FOR ZWEIGART EVENWEAVE & AIDA



This embroidery has been worked on 28 count Brittany evenweave. The pattern includes pulled thread work which should be stitched on an evenweave fabric.



This extract from 'Tiny Treasures' has been worked on 14 count Aida. Pulled thread work on Aida should be considered as an embroidery stitch. Experiment with different fabrics and thread counts until you find one that you are comfortable working with!



### New design for July:

#### CH0391 Delightful Diamonds and Needlework Accessories

Take a fresh look at the technique of blackwork and create a series of different projects ranging from a cushion or picture to a box top and needlework accessories.

#### Main Design

Design Area: 10.00 x 10.00 inches

Material: Zweigart 28 count evenweave, 25 count Lugana, or 14 count Aida, 14 x 14 inches

#### Pin Cushion or Box Top

Design Area: 7.14 x 7.14 inches

Material: Zweigart 28 count evenweave, 25 count Lugana, or 14 count Aida Material, 12 x 12 inches

#### Needlecase or cards

Design Area: 6.00 x 11.29 inches

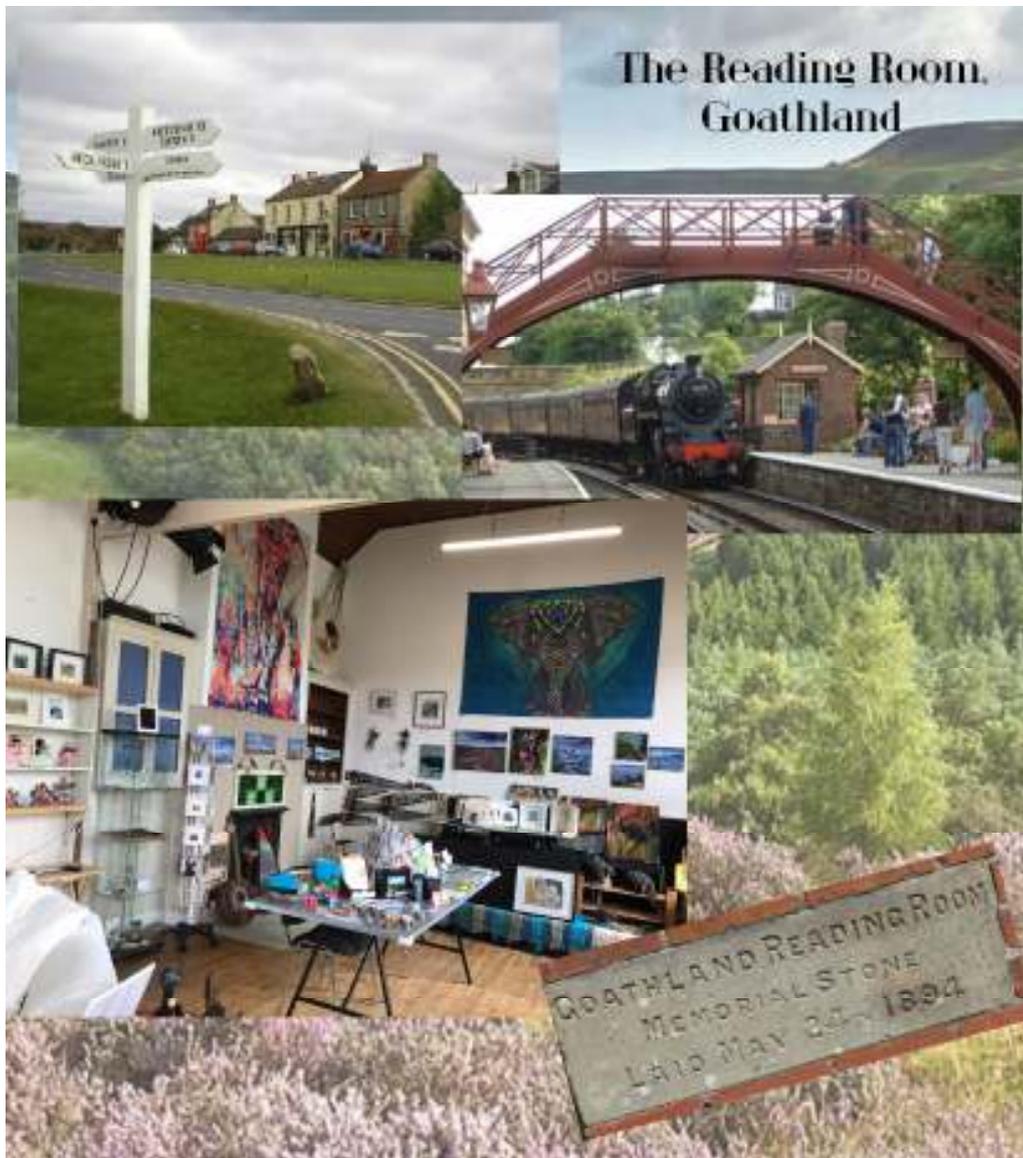
Material, 15 x 9 inches

### The Reading Room, a new craft venture in the North Yorkshire village of Goathland

When I travel round the UK teaching, I always try to find needlework shops or new craft galleries. Setting up a new business in the current economic climate is difficult and I was delighted to find a new venture in the attractive village of Goathland.

The village was the setting of the fictional village of Aidensfield in the 'Heartbeat' television series set in the 1960s. Many landmarks from the series are recognisable, including the stores, garage/funeral directors and the public house. Much of North Yorkshire is a national park and also has a station for the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, so it attracts many visitors every year and is the ideal location for a small community craft venture.

The Reading Room is a community arts gallery and workspace run by Musicport, the Whitby based arts organisation. The aim is to provide a creative space for local and visiting artists to display, work and run workshops. The building originally providing reading materials for the local community.



They are a group of about 8 artists who display their work and take it in turns to man the venue. The instigators of the idea were Maria Silman and Sue McLaughlin who, with a group of friends, renovated and decorated the venue. It has only been open for a few weeks, but contains a wealth of different crafts to explore and enjoy.

I wish them every success in their venture and look forward to visiting them again in the future.

Their address is; The Green, Goathland, Whitby YO22 5LX, UK

[readingroomgoathland@gmail.com](mailto:readingroomgoathland@gmail.com)

Happy stitching! *Liz*