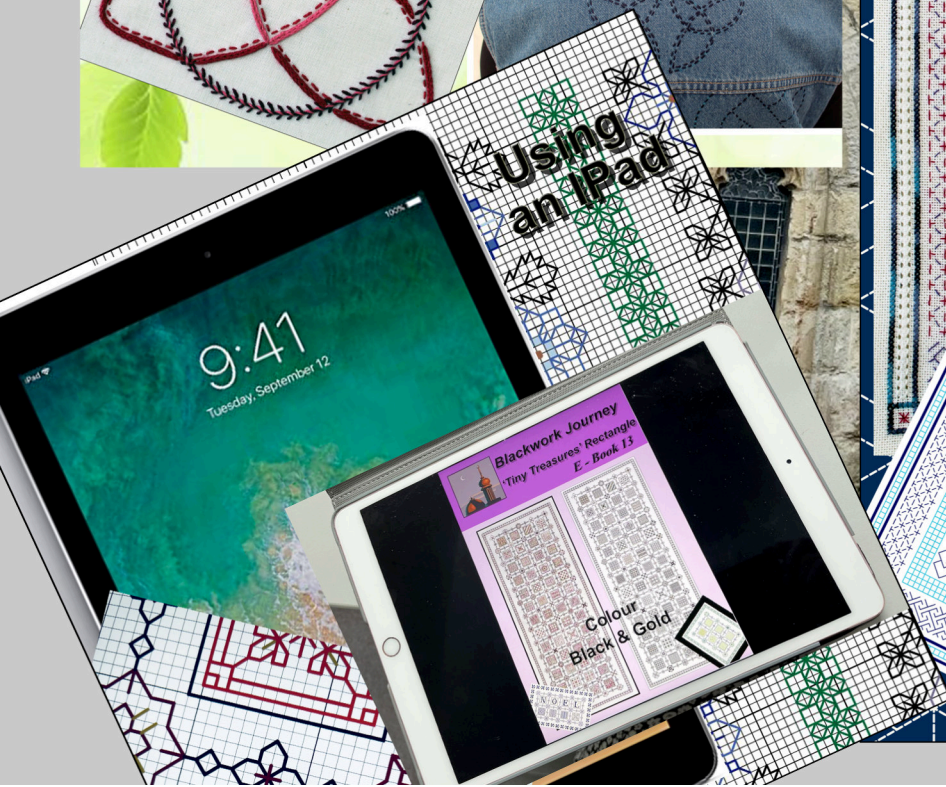




# *Blackwork Journey Blog*

August 2021







*Polperro in Cornwall, UK – a sleepy fishing village!*

### **August – the height of the English summer!**

The solstice on 21 June marked the official beginning of summer; a season for beach trips, long evenings, and though it may not feel like it at times, some great British weather.

This year summer has been very different because of the Covid19 pandemic across the world and in the UK we have looked forward to summer with mixed emotions. Restrictions are slowly being eased as the vaccination programme is rolled out, but the virus is still with us and people are uncertain, confused and apprehensive about the future.

Holidaying at home is the norm for us this year, so we visited Cornwall in south west England for a few days where I met up with a friend I had not seen for over 40 years. Val was one of the first pupils I ever taught when I was a very young geography teacher and she was a shy 15 year old. Although I went to her wedding, our lives went in different directions and we lost touch. However, I was delighted when she found me on Google and contacted me so I travelled down to Cornwall to see her. It was a joy to meet up again and exchange memories. Facetime, Zoom and e-mails are no substitute for face to face contact, but over the last two years they have become a way of life and for many it will, no doubt, be the norm for a long time. However, friends and family are more important than ever and I cannot wait for the travel ban to be lifted so we can go to San Francisco to see our son and family. Until then, we make the best of what we have and make each day count.

## The importance of a hobby!

Holidays abroad are still a distant prospect and as a result we continue to work and play within the confines of our own homes and looking for hobbies that satisfy our creative needs and entertain us. Many people are discovering embroidery for the first time or rediscovering forgotten skills. Blackwork Journey and its associated Facebook groups has continued to grow, develop and support its many readers and it has been a joy to see the pictures of work completed and new projects begun.

The way we work, socialise and interact with others is different and the changes have been reflected in the way we shop. Many high streets are full of empty shops and needlework and craft shops are difficult to find. Choosing threads and fabric on the internet is not the same or as satisfying as seeing the colours or handling the fabrics. I have missed the craft shows and exhibitions, so I hope they will return over the next year. Until then, I can browse the internet, add new designs to the website, work on magazine and book commissions and stitch to my heart's content and I know from the e-mails I receive, that a lot of you are doing just that!

## Olympics 2021 Japan



The Olympics are finally underway in Japan after being postponed from last year. They are the world's only truly global, multi-sport, celebratory athletics competition. With more than 200 countries participating in over 400 events, the Olympics are where the world comes to compete, feel inspired and be together. We were in Japan when they were promoting the Games for 2020, but little did we imagine that they would be cancelled due to a major pandemic!

Looking back through old photographs of sporting costume and watching the events on television made me reflect on how different our attitude to sport is from previous generations. The ninth International Stoke Mandeville Games, considered the first Paralympic Games, took place in Rome, September 1960, six days after the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games. Twenty-three nations took part, sending 400 athletes - all in wheelchairs - who competed in eight sports: athletics, wheelchair basketball, swimming, table tennis, archery, snooker, darts (a combination of darts and archery) and wheelchair fencing.

The man-made, easy-care, washable fabrics that are in common use today for casual and sportswear could not have been imagined one hundred years ago and the idea of women participating in many modern activities would have been considered unladylike.

## Swimming



"I find that ladies in their bathing dresses are much more buoyant in the water than persons with nothing on them, but bathing drawers...the bathing dress keeps out the repeated cold shocks that the naked body has to incur."

Sergeant John Leahy, *Art of Swimming*, 1875

*"Don't Be Afraid" - Man and woman in bathing suits with bathing machine c. 1910*



Swimming emerged as a competitive recreational activity in the 1830's in England. Men's swimming became part of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896 in Athens. Women's swimming was introduced into the Olympics in 1912; the first international swim meet for women outside the Olympics was the 1922 Women's Olympiad.

### Riding

There are many descriptions of 'suitable' clothing for sporting activities for Edwardian and Victorian society.



*Caricature of Elizabeth the Empress of Austria. 1884  
Published in Vanity Fair, 5 April 1884*

A riding habit is women's clothing for horseback riding.

Since the mid-17th century, a formal habit for riding side-saddle usually consisted of:

A tailored jacket with a long skirt (sometimes called a petticoat) to match

A tailored shirt or chemisette

A hat, often in the most formal men's style of the day (since the Victorian era, a top hat with a veil has been worn)

Low-heeled boots, gloves and often a necktie or stock to complete the ensemble.

The wind is sometimes indiscreet and agitates the skirts of a lady on horseback.. gather all the skirts together under a leather strap, which.. is most uncomfortable.. much simpler...also less secure...fasten the skirts to another with pins.'

L.H de Pons d'Hostun, L'Ecuyer des Dames, 1860



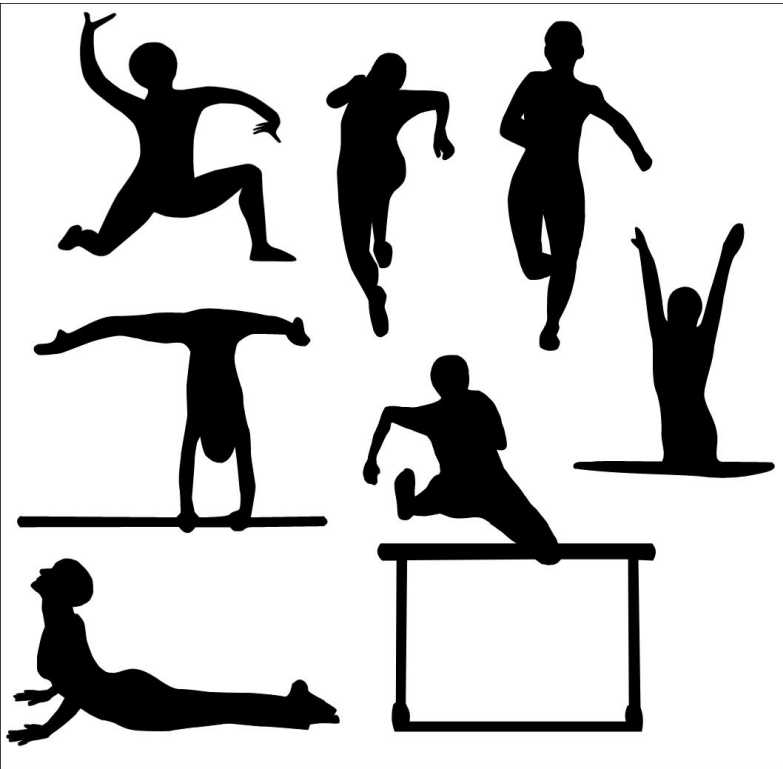
*Rachael Blackmore after winning the Grand National at the Cheltenham Festival in March 2021.  
What would she have thought of the 1880's riding attire?*

Whether we are participating in sporting events or just out for a walk, a game of golf or bowls, cycling, yoga or riding we take well designed, practical clothing and footwear for granted. Contrast this with the description for a ladies walking outfit from the 1850's. I cannot imagine wearing a bonnet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!



## Blackwork Journey Blog, August 2021

“...walking dress should be quiet in colour, simple, substantial...For the country the attire should be tasteful, solid and strong. The bonnet...may still be becoming.”  
Habits of Good Society, 1859



Sports fabrics are technical materials which help to keep the wearer comfortable during exercise. The type of fabric required will depend upon the intensity of the exercise and the activity. Yoga clothing should use fabrics with exceptional stretch ability for easy movement which will likely require the fabric to be of a knitted construction.

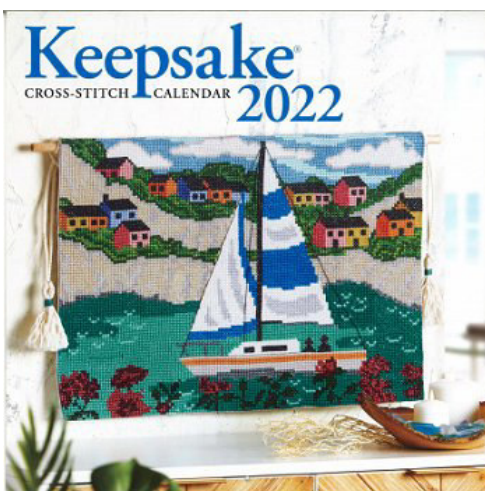
Apparel for long distance running will keep the wearer in good comfort if it has excellent moisture wicking properties to enable sweat to transfer from the inside to the outside for the garment. Performance clothing for outdoor sports in the winter or snow sports should use breathable fabrics with very good insulating properties.



*Silhouettes of sportsmen and women make excellent subjects for embroidery. Trace the shape onto the fabric. Back stitch the outline and fill the figure with blackwork.*

**Be grateful for the practical clothing and footwear we have today!**

### New publications 2022



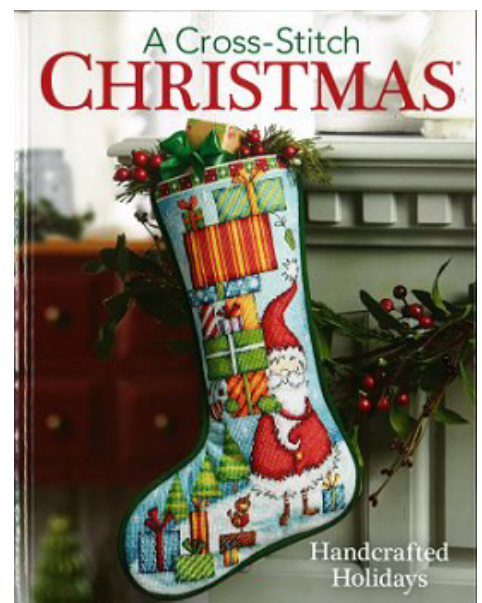
The postman delivered two parcels this week:

#### **Cross Stitch & Needlework Keepsake Calendar 2022**

13 monthly designs, Charts for the designs in the calendar are included in a separate booklet and,

#### **Craftways - A Cross Stitch Christmas - Handcrafted Holidays (2021)**

It is always great fun to see Blackwork Journey charts published and I have worked with both 'Just Cross Stitch' and 'Cross Stitch and Needlework' for a number of years. Their support for designers is appreciated in an increasingly difficult industry.







## New charts for August

Two new charts have been added to the website this month:

### CH0416 Exploration Sashiko

Japanese Sashiko patterns into embroidery – two charts with different colour combinations have been included. This is the third in the series Sashiko into counted thread work.

Design Area:

9.00 x 9.00 inches, 126 x 126 stitches

Material:

Zweigart 28 count evenweave 12 x 12 inches

Taking the Sashiko embroidery stitches and translating them into blackwork embroidery requires careful planning and counting, but the challenge was both interesting and creative. Six different Sashiko patterns have been recreated and stitched as blackwork embroidery.

This design can be found in 'Charts' Page 1.

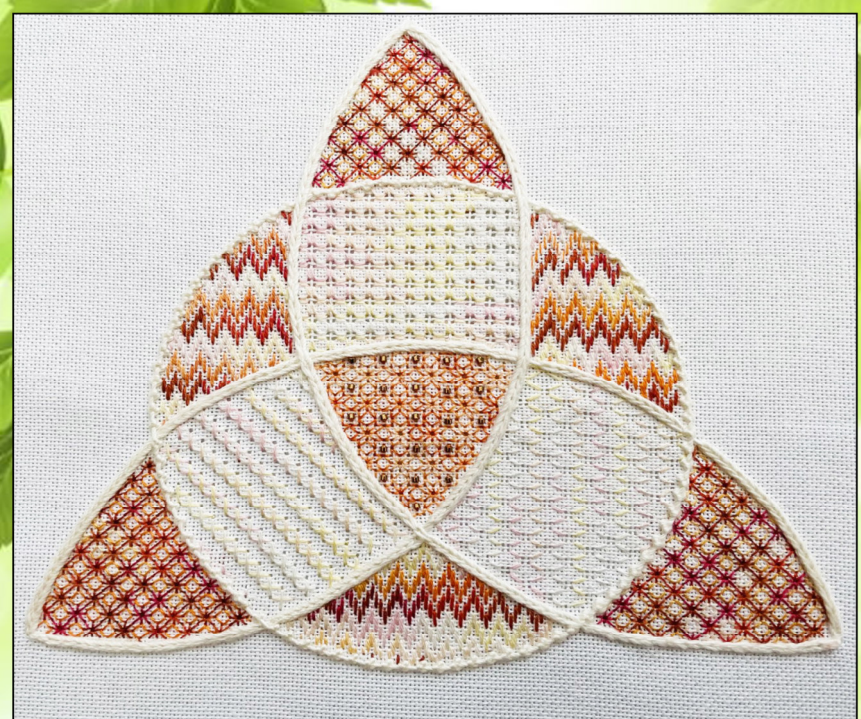
I am also designing a series of embroideries for a Sacred Geometry course. Interlocking Celtic designs have always fascinated me and the Trinity Knot which I saw in a churchyard in Cornwall was a good example. I have explored the design on different fabrics and using different techniques.

### PR0067 Trinity Knot

This is the best known Celtic knot and is also called the Triquetra. Like the Celtic cross, the origin of the Trinity Knot goes back to pagan Ireland, where three was the magic number. Christians used it as a sign of the Holy Trinity and it most famously appears in the 9th century Book of Kells which is housed in Trinity College, Dublin.







The Trinity knot remains an age-old Irish symbol of eternity. The points on this three-fold knot are said to represent the Holy Trinity of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit, but this cannot be verified as historically accurate. In the modern era, you will see the Trinity knot in jewellery and tattoo designs. Take this traditional design and interpret in embroidery using blackwork and pulled thread techniques.

Two designs have been included in different techniques on different fabrics.

The embroidery, Florentine, blackwork and pulled thread design is worked on:

Zweigart 28 count evenweave, 12 x 12 inches.

The pulled stitches were worked in a pastel DMC floss, two strands.

Chart 2 - the embroidered Triquetra is worked in hand embroidery:



A simple line design like this can be used in a number of ways on different fabrics. It can also be enlarged for different projects such as the yoke on a jacket or a tote bag.

Material: Medium weight cotton, pre-washed calico and denim worked on pre-washed calico or medium weight cotton.

I hope you enjoy these designs and exploring different ways of using them. The designs become your own once you start to stitch them and adding your own choice of colours and personal touches is what makes embroidery so satisfying!

### Printed charts – what size should they be?

Having bought some charts recently and had difficulty working from them, I posed a question to the Facebook groups regarding the thinking behind the charts I design for Blackwork Journey:

*'As I get older and my eyesight is less sharp, I find it more and more difficult to see some of the detail on charts that I have purchased. Bearing this in mind, the*

*Blackwork Journey charts are made as clear and large as necessary, so that I can see the stitches easily.*





*If the chart has a number of pages I glue them together to make one chart and then fold the chart. If it means four pages rather than two or six pages rather than four that is what I do. How do you feel about the size of charts? Are you happy to work with a larger print?’*

The response was interesting. Most members like the idea of larger charts with clear symbols which they can enlarge, print off and glue together to make a larger chart but a number of members use their tablets to view their charts.

*Enlarge the paper chart so that you can work from it comfortably. Mark the centre lines on the chart and if possible, work from the centre outwards to ensure that the pattern is positioned correctly on the fabric. If necessary, cross out the areas as you work them especially on complicated patterns.*

### How to use an iPad to view PDFs:

I was asked if I could do an outline of how to view PDF's.

Whilst I keep my charts on the computer, the idea of downloading the PDF to the iPad and then being able to zoom in and out as necessary is a very practical way of viewing the chart and looking in more detail at small areas of pattern.

Tablets are portable with good background light, so working from them is easy to do.

The charts sent by e-mail from Blackwork Journey are in the form of PDF's which can be downloaded.

Method:

1. Navigate to the PDF. If the PDF is attached to an email message, open that email message now.

2. Tap the PDF. If it's an email attachment, it's probably at the bottom of the message. This opens the file in a simple reader.

If you're using Safari, the Mail app, or the Gmail app, the PDF should open in a basic readable format. You can swipe left or right through the file to flip through the pages. If you just need a quick glance at the file, this could be enough for you. If you need to do more, keep reading!

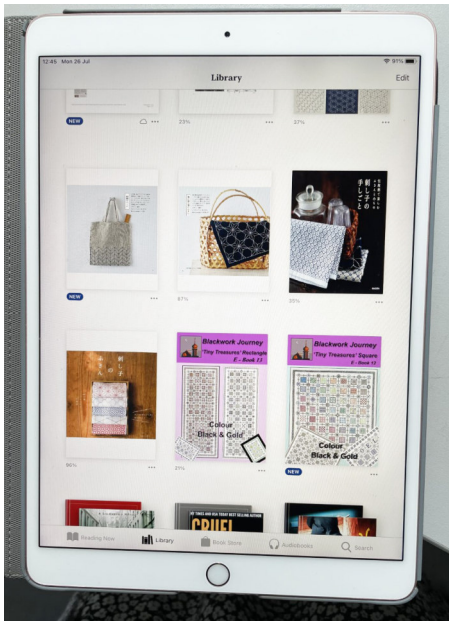
3. Tap the Share icon





## Blackwork Journey Blog, August 2021

It's the square with an upward-pointing arrow. It's at the bottom of the screen if you're using Safari or the Mail app, but could be in a different location in other browsers and apps.



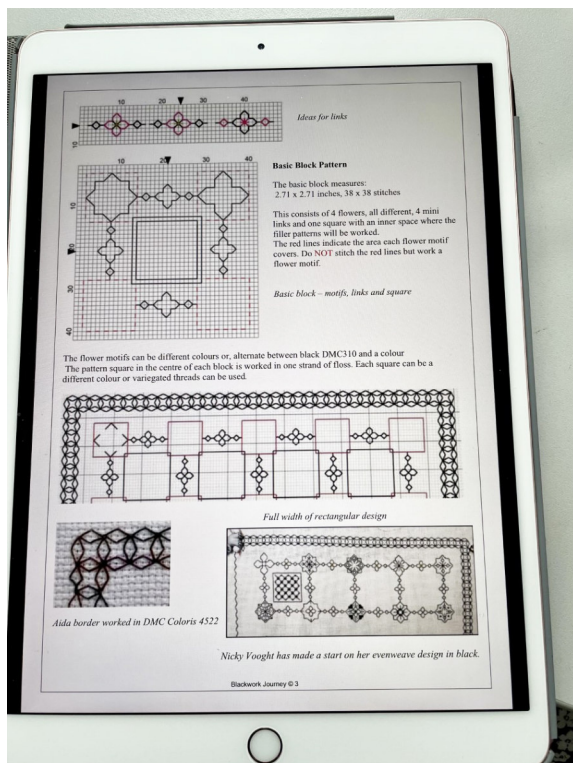
4. Scroll right and tap **Copy to Books**. It's an orange icon in the icon list near the bottom of the screen. This saves the PDF to your library and launches the Apple Books app. I usually store the pdf I am working on here so that I can go back to it anytime.



5. Tap the PDF to open it in Apple Books. This expands the PDF into full-screen mode.

Now that the PDF is saved to your library, you can view it at any time by tapping the orange Books icon on your home screen and selecting the file.

6. Swipe right or left through the pages. Each swipe will move you forward or backward one page.



To view a visual table of contents that lets you quickly switch between pages, tap the PDF once to bring up the toolbar, and then tap the icon of three lines prefaced by three dots near the top-left corner.

To bookmark a page, tap the screen once and then tap the bookmark icon at the top-right corner.



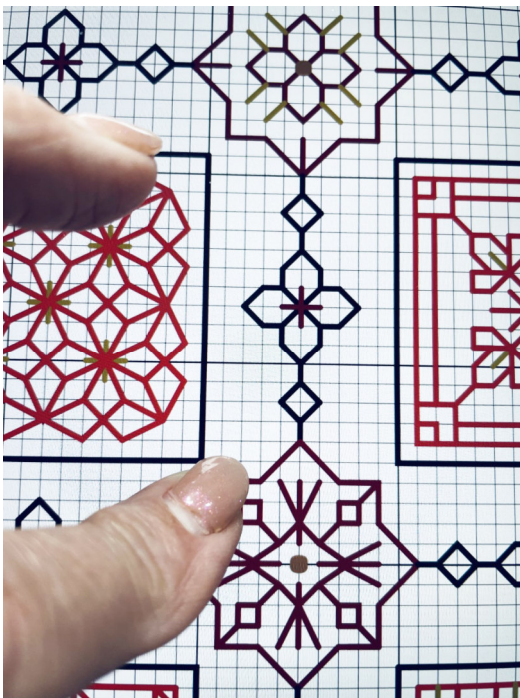
## Blackwork Journey Blog, August 2021



7. Mark up the PDF. To highlight items and/or draw on your PDF, tap the screen once to bring up the toolbar, and then tap the marker icon at the top to open the PDF in Markup. You can use the different pens, highlighters and tools to add what you wish to the file.

Tap the undo icon (the curved arrow pointing left inside of a circle) at the top to reverse your changes.

Tap the back button (the < at the top-left corner) to return to your library. This will save any changes you made in Markup, although you can return to Markup at any point to add or remove markings.



8. Zoom in and out as needed. Go to the PDF and double-tap the screen using three fingers; it enlarges. Press three fingers on the screen and drag to move around it if you like. Double-tap with three fingers again to go back to regular magnification.

Your tablet might be different according to the make, but the idea behind it is the same. If you have Books on your iPhone the same method applies.

<https://support.apple.com/eng/guide/ipad/>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Read-PDFs-on-an-iPad>

### How do I read PDF files on my Samsung tablet?

1. Upload PDF and EPUB files
2. On your Android phone or tablet, open the Google Play Books app. .
3. Tap Menu Settings. Enable PDF uploading.
4. Download a PDF or EPUB file on your device.
5. Open your Downloads or Files app.
6. Find the file.
7. Tap More Open With. Play Books or Upload to Play Books.



Readers Work



Over the past few months many members have posted their work on the Facebook groups, but one that really appealed to me was worked by Jean for her grandson and new granddaughter's wedding. Mayya and her new husband live in Japan and Mayya comes from Thailand so it was very appropriate that Jean stitched CH0187 Thai Lotus. Thank you for sharing your beautiful picture Jean and congratulations to both of you.



EB0004 Box of Delights

Ana Mendonça-Guiomar *'The photos simply don't do it justice - Box of Delights finished!'*

Kay Richardson - CH0017 Heraldic Gold Cross

*'Back from the framer just in time! I retire next week & this design by Elizabeth Almond is my parting gift to my boss, a reverend. (He'll have to think of me each time he looks at it!) The design is called Heraldic Cross.'*

Happy retirement Kay!







Susan Mol posted this for a friend - CH0151 Freshfields

*'I am posting this for Linda Forest, a friend of mine. She has finished and framed Freshfields and I think it is absolutely beautiful.'*

### CH0218 Bukhara

Laurel Cole has

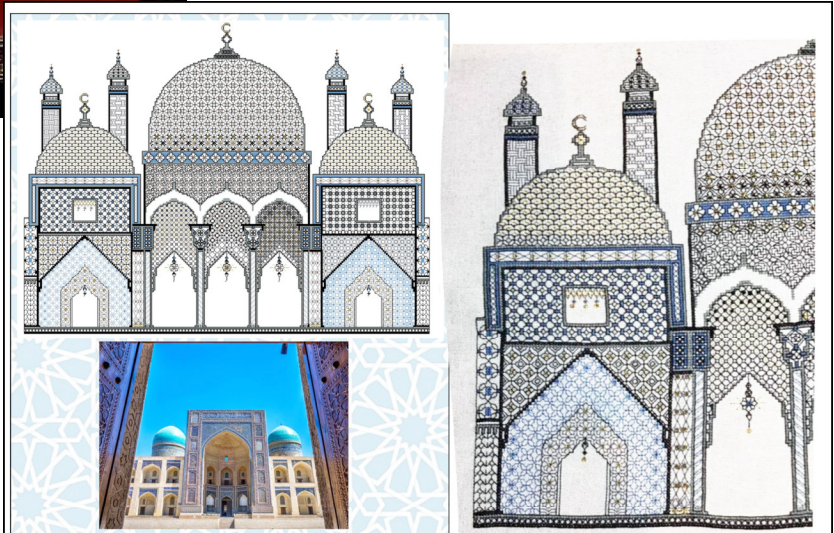
*'Finally finished this labour of love for a beautiful friend who is going through a really rough time at present.'*

*It is Bukhara by Elizabeth Almond and has been a joy to embroider.*

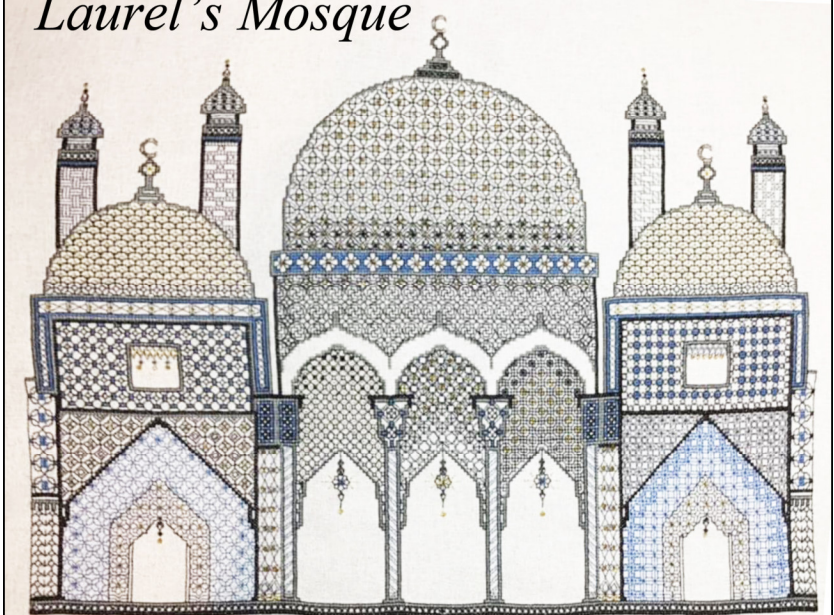
*I used 28 count Lugana even weave in Antique white. DMC 310,317,169,826 and Petite treasures Old Gold braid. Tiny antique gold glass beads for the accents.*

*A few tiny mistakes which were not found until I finished so we're not corrected! My little bit of imperfection!'*

Laurel - I think there is a saying in the Islamic world Laurel that 'Only Allah is perfect!'



### Laurel's Mosque





### Sublime Stitches Project – worked over 12 months

Manuela is one of the many members who are working on the EB0009 and EB0010 Sublime Stitches projects over 12 months as a SAL with her group Bordados con el Alma.

If you want to work the project it can be found in E-books on the website and also in parts in Freebies.

It has been translated into Spanish for any non-English speaking members. It is a pleasure to see so many members posting their work in progress.

*Manuela's work in progress*



Stay safe and happy stitching. *Liz*

Aisha Elmarsafy – Sublime Stitches

*“I finally finished it and framed it myself this morning. Now it lies in my living room, just next to my stitching spot/station.*

*Liz, I cannot thank you enough. It was a pleasure working on that project as well as many others. Looking at all the beauties everyone is making was also equally stimulating and encouraging.*

*It is mounted with a glass cover, Egypt is a very dusty country, impossible to mount it without glass cover”.*

I hope you have enjoyed this month's Blog. Please keep sending me your pictures and e-mails. I love receiving them and seeing all the different choices you make.

