

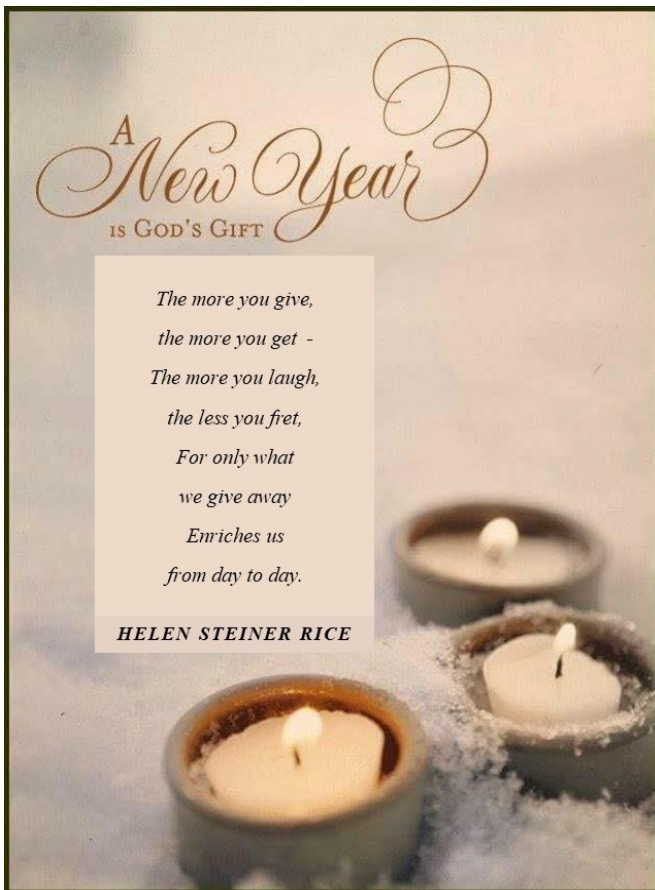


~ 2026 ~

A NEW YEAR

DECISIONS ~ DECISIONS ~ DECISIONS

1 January 2026



Dear Needlework Friends,

Over the past few weeks, whilst having an enforced rest, I have been planning all sorts of exciting things for this new year of 2026.

Anyone have any spare energy? I know I will need it!

Decisions. Decisions. Decisions

1. Sampler Blessings Challenge
2. NATTER Days & HOME SWEET HOME Days will resume in February
3. Fabric & Thread Collectors programmes will begin in March
4. April. Not a SAL but a SWM (Stitch With Me) - a six monthly project.
Not a mystery sampler as previous years but a special design featuring various sampler motifs and an alphabet worked with a silk overdyed thread and complementary plain coloured threads
5. Possible weekend retreat in the Waikato? Or maybe a mid-winter Christmas exhibition?
6. Maybe a Christmas Ornaments Class - two days of stitching & how to finish
7. September Sampler. For you - begin stitching one from your stash & for me, advise the sampler I have created for 2026

And so - just like that - it will be October 2026! By this time I will have had to create a new design to be one of the 2027 Sampler Blessings Challenge pieces and thought about the other options.

In between all these happenings there is always orders to send out, customers queries to answer, ordering of new & restocking of sold out fabrics, threads & designs, Gallery open days, stitch days/get-togethers, newsletters to draft, create & send, updating the website with new products, news, etc., creating

Instagram & Facebook posts (which sadly are very much neglected), business admin, correspondence & accounting records to keep, implementing new ideas, charting, writing the instructions, ordering the frames, photographing & visiting the printer before all new designs can be published, plus all the other endless little things that need attention when one owns and operates their own business without any employee help. One of the hardest and most unpleasant aspects of being in business these days is the impatience, intolerance and expectations of some wanting to see everything on social media or expecting an immediate response to their email or fulfilment of their order, which makes life stressful. Life is no longer quiet, peaceful and simple as it used to be. All these things take time and keep me from being with my family and doing what I love to do - stitching & designing. I am SO blessed though to be doing what I love, blessed by so many customers who have become faithful, wonderful and understanding friends, and I am SO grateful to Keith and daughter, Melissa, for all their help and support with doing so many of the daily household chores and looking after me when I am unwell. Without them I could not do all that I am doing and sharing my passion with you.

Details of all the above mentioned plans will be conveyed to you in future newsletters. I wonder what your hopes and plans and dreams for 2026 are. I encourage you to take hold of these, believe and expect them and good things to happen. We all make mistakes and encounter setbacks and heartaches and often have tried things that didn't work out the way we had expected. Don't let the disappointments of the past discourage you but keep going so that you can fulfil your hopes, plans and dreams and therefore truly enjoy your life.

Your Needlework Friend,
Sherelyn

January ~ Sampler Blessings Challenge

~

Have you begun your sampler?

A reminder of the design options suggested for this year



Our Time



The Orford Sampler



A Collection of Antique Red Samplers



Le Petite Lettres



Fleur de Noel



Miranda 1845



A Little Dutch Sampler



Elizabeth A Wenden 1864



A sampler
from
your stash

To date, the most popular choices have been - Our Time : Fleur de Noel : Miranda 1845 & Elizabeth A. Wenden 1864
Several friends have chosen to stitch a design from their stash.

Earlier this morning received the following text message from a friend,
"HAPPY NEW YEAR to you Keith and Melissa and all the best for 2026.

I saw the old year out and welcomed in the new year with a glass of Port in my hand!!
I am ready to start on my challenge today! And look forward to seeing you later in the month xx"

[VIEW or ORDER - Sampler Blessings Chal-](#)

Special Stitch Days to work on our sampler pieces together
have been planned

Sampler Blessings Challenge ~ 2026 ~ Special Stitch Days

Where: 9 Cumberland Rise • Taradale • Napier 4112

When: Fridays - 16 & 30 January

What Time: 10.30am - 3pm

What To Bring: Your Challenge piece (or current needlework project), your lunch, your smile and kind words

During November and December I worked several of the designs to ascertain the quantity of thread required for each piece.

To follow are images of the pieces I stitched.

Our Time



The verse on this sampler reads ...

The way we spend our time defines who we are

I stitched this piece over two fabric threads with the various coloured DMC Stranded Cottons on Permin Linen (32 count) - White Chocolate.

Finished with a frame.

Stitched this piece again - this time over one fabric thread on Cashel Linen (28 count) - Flax with a Simply Shaker Sampler Thread - Old Red Paint and one skein of DMC Stranded Cotton - 3722

Finished as an ornamental / small pillow.



Miranda 1845

This piece I worked over two fabric threads on Permin Linen (40 count) - Lambswool but did not use the Weeks Dye Works threads as originally used by designer, Teresa Kogut.

Instead used a combination of Sampler Thread (*Espresso Bean*) Simply Shaker Sampler Threads (*Endive & Brick Path*) & DMC Stranded Cottons (221 & 610).

Also, as the sampler is an original design and not an antique sampler, placed my name and the year of the sampler challenge on it.

Finished it as an ornamental / small pillow.



A Little Dutch Sampler 1870



This piece I worked over 1 fabric thread on 28 count Cashel Linen - Antique White with almost all of the 28 DMC colours (*didn't quite have all the colours in my stash*) and finished it as an ornamental / small pillow.

One day I may work the design over two fabric threads but as I have so many pieces I'd like to stitch, the likelihood doesn't look promising.



Le Petite Lettres



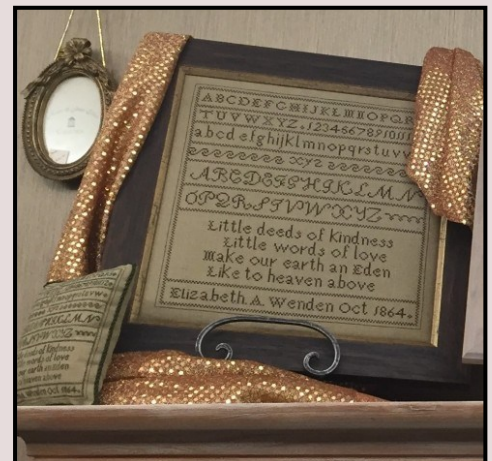
This piece pictured is not quite finished but will be in the next day or so.

I am working this piece with one strand of Silk 'n Colors thread by *The Thread Gatherer* - SNC 006 : Stormy Skies on 32 count Permin Linen - Star Sapphire (a pale blue).



Elizabeth A. Wenden 1864

The picture to the right was taken in the Pakowhai Road Needlework Gallery before the flood. I had stitched this design twice - over one and over two fabric threads. Never found the over one piece finished as a little pillow but did find the larger piece in the wet sticky mud. Keith has hosed it for me but as yet I have not hand-washed it or had it reframed. I will one day. Doing such tasks is still quite heart wrenching. Can't recall the thread I used but remember the fabric being Belfast Linen - Dirty Linen



Fleur de Noel



And so to my chosen challenge piece for this month - Fleur de Noel.

Pictured is the fabric I've chosen -

Premin Linen - 32 count : Tumble Tweed

Still dithering over the thread colour - Ecrû, 712 or 746?

Plan to finish this as an ornamental.



Melinda's Marking Sampler

One of my friends has chosen to stitch Melinda's Marking Sampler by JBW Designs from her stash as her challenge piece.

I stitched this design before the flood, over one fabric thread and mounted it on a hornbook, but lost it in the flood.

Originally the design was stitched in blue but I chose a rusty red - Country Redwood.

A Sampler Thread by *The Gentle Art*.

This is pictured below.

Another friend (*who sadly passed away at the end of 2024*) also stitched this piece.

It too is pictured below, finished as an ornamental / small pillow.



My Needlework Diary

I am sure you will have heard or know about the awesome publication

~ Book of Days ~

by Vickie & Meagan of Needlework Press

in which one can record their daily stitching achievements, WIPS, etc.

Heirlooms has a similar publication ~ My Needlework Diary.

Unfortunately printing of it was not completed before Christmas

and so not available for purchase

before the beginning of this new year.

It should be available soon after the printing company

resumes business

after their Christmas/New Year holiday time.

Details of the diary's content, price, etc.

will be in the next Heirlooms newsletter.

In the meantime, pictured to the right

is a sneak peek at the cover of it.



Needlework Designs

Also over the past few weeks whilst having my enforced rest, I have been writing the instructions of several needlework pieces that I designed and stitched in 2025, plus I charted another couple of designs that have been in sketch form in my design folder for over three years.

Thus, when my printing company resumes business, the 2025 stitched designs will be printed

and then I will begin the stitching of the recently charted designs -
Shades of Teal
ABC & Flowers

Stitching of my 2025 'Shereyn's September Sampler' is almost completed.

So many ideas - so little time!



*Thank you for being a part of our Barberry Row & Heirlooms Needlework Family
and for your loyal support. Sincerely appreciated.*

Sherelyn

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*Thank you
Sherelyn*

