

**Blog #103 - Spring Has Sprung:**  
October 2020

As per the title I have given this blog - Spring has sprung here at our place and pictured to the right is the view of one of our cherry trees situated just outside my office window.

So beautiful. On a windy day the blossom fills the air like confetti.

Another beautiful aspect of this time is the flowering of over eighty rose bushes, standards and climbers dotted throughout our garden. One of my favourites though is 'Birthday Present'. A deep crimson almost black coloured rose which has the most glorious perfume. It is a climbing rose and here are a couple of pics of it in the garden and in a vase on our little table in the breakfast nook.

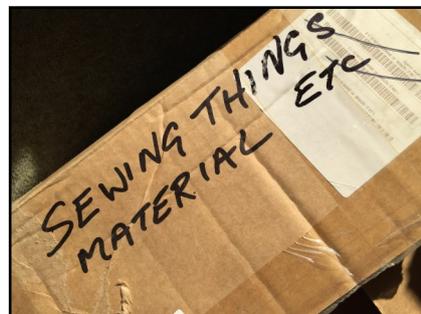


The first day of this month was busy with the mailing out of and the sending of Part One of 'Ackworth Flowers' and then I began the unenviable task of sorting through boxes and boxes and crates of unfinished needlework projects; endless stacks of fabrics (both sewing & needlework linens - many of them not even folded); bags and bags of assorted and more often than not, tangled needlework threads, endless soft and hard-covered needlework books and pages and pages of handwritten teaching instructions for needlework projects.

This all came about after the passing of a lovely friend and needlework customer - Jean. Sadly her daughter is not a needleworker and so she passed all her mother's needlework items to me.

Jean was a needlework tutor at one time, often teaching at 'The Embroiderer' - a dedicated needlework shop in Auckland.

Many of Jean's treasures I will keep, but some I will give to our local hospice shop and some - when I have finished sorting through everything - I will eventually have here at the Needlework Gallery on display to be purchased for a donation which will be given to the hospice. Below are images of the crates, boxes, etc.



To date, thankfully all of these crates and boxes pictured above and to the right are empty.

I still have the above stack of blue edged drawers to go through!

But goodness knows when I will get back to facing that daunting task.

During this month some of my stitching friends came to chat and stitch and enjoy one another's company and on that day Glenys (from Waipukurau) brought her finished pouch to show us. She was really pleased with her work, especially as she has only been stitching for a couple of years and mastered her first attempt of stitching over one fabric thread as this was a part of the design. Also, the design is created with the English embroidery technique of Fisherton de la Mere, which is not a frequently used technique. Pictured below is a couple of views of Glenys's poche and one of the original design. Amazing the difference that is achieved by the choice of fabrics and thread colours.



The original design  
~  
Design Title:  
Hem Your Blessings Poche

Design Code:  
BARB 1014

Price: \$ 25.00



As for my stitching achievements this month, worked both sides of the letter 'W' and finished it as an ornamental, wrote the instructions and the design printed and therefore published. It's amazing what one can achieve when they have a 'dead-line'. I had received an order for this letter and so had to do it.

For the letter chose - Wisdom and Wendy.

As for the colour - Blue : 312 : 334 : 3325  
but one can choose the colour combination that is their favourite.  
Nine alternative colour choices are included with the design.

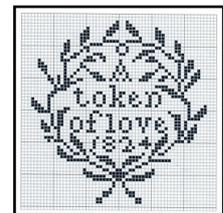
Also this month I had the thought that I should design a "freebie" thank you chart to be given at the end of the six months to all those ladies who participated in the 'Ackworth Flowers' Mystery Sampler project.



BARB 1026W - The Letter 'W' is for .... \$25.00

Consequently was inspired to use another of the Ackworth School sampler motifs - A Token of Love and so used this as the centre of the design and began stitching it over two fabric threads on the same fabric and with some of the same threads as used in the large sampler :

Permin Linen - 35 count : Lambswool  
Overdyed silk thread - SNC 230 : Forest Berries  
DMC threads - 150 : 779 : 936 : 3011 : 3051 : 3731



And now back to the Lady Anne's Needlework Retreat.  
Day 9 - Friday, 27th of September 2019 : the day I spent in Lavenham

Whilst I was wandering about the streets of Lavenham and then travelling to the next Lady Anne's Needlework Retreat destination at Horley, the ladies experienced two venues - viewing the antique, unusual and rare contents of the home of Meg Andrews situated in Hackney, East London followed by the treasures at Knole - a country house situated in Kent.

Meg Andrews sources, researches and sells examples of antique dress and textiles and has been advising and selling to

collectors, museums, decorators, designers and enthusiasts in the UK, Europe, North America and beyond for thirty five years.

Prior to that she established the Costume and Textile Department - Sotheby's Belgravia, London and for 18 years regularly lectured at Sotheby's Institute on English Furnishings of the 16th and 17th centuries, Chinese Court Costumes and Kashmir and Shawls of Paisley Design.

In 1986 she lectured at the 'Treasure Houses of Britain' exhibition in Washington, DC on the textiles and costumes in the portraits.

Also she has contributed chapters to various books on the subject of the history of furnishing textiles, costumes, etc. and for thirteen years wrote a regular column for an embroidery magazine.

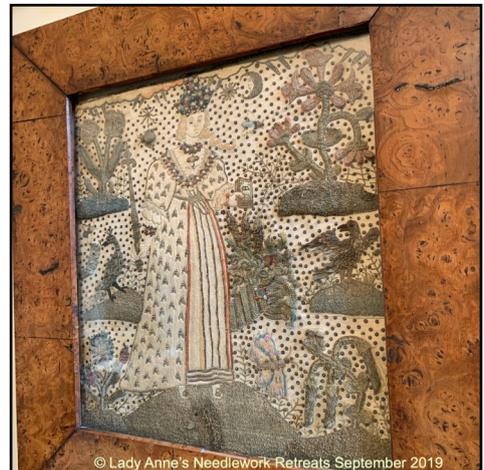
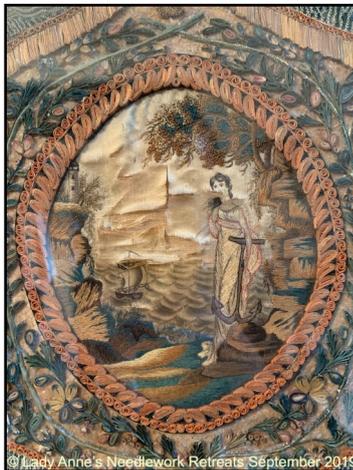
Certainly a very knowledgeable lady. Had I been able to visit, I am certain that an antique sampler she had for sale would definitely have been purchased and travelled home with me.

Check out her website and subscribe to her newsletter - [www.meg-andrews.com](http://www.meg-andrews.com) or follow her on Instagram - [megandrewstextiles](https://www.instagram.com/megandrewstextiles)

To follow are images of some of her private collection of needlework pieces.  
(All images used with permission from Lady Anne's Needlework Retreat)



And here are close-ups of some of these wonderful pieces -



And more close-ups of some of the needlework pieces in Meg's private collection -



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Anne's Needlework Retreats September 2019

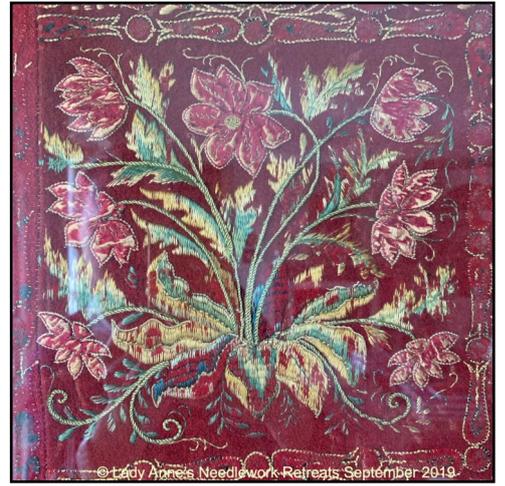


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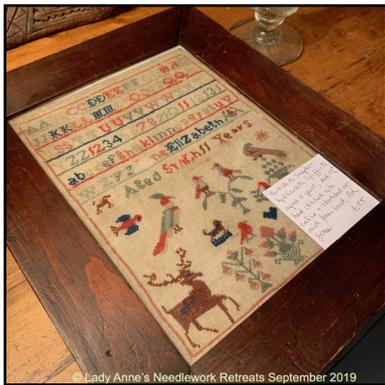
And again, more close-ups of some of the needlework pieces in Meg's private collection -



And here are some of the items that were for sale -



And some more items that were for sale -



The sampler below I think is the sampler that would have travelled home with me. If not that one, then the one above (top left).



From Meg's London home, the ladies travelled to Knole house in Kent where they had some lunch there and then toured the rooms that are open to the public.

At one time Lady Anne Clifford (after whom Phillipa has named her needlework retreats) once lived here. But more about that later.



Knole is a country house and former archbishop's palace situated within Knole Park, a 1,000 acre park located immediately to the south-east of Sevenoaks in West Kent.

From an even older manor house, it was built and extended by the Archbishops of Canterbury after 1456. It then became a royal possession during the Tudor dynasty when Henry VIII hunted here and found the place a useful residence for his daughter -

later to become Mary I - during his divorce from her mother, Catherine of Aragon. It is also said that Elizabeth I visited.

From 1603, Thomas Sackville made it the aristocratic treasure house for the Sackville family who were prominent and influential in court circles.

Knole's showrooms were designed to impress visitors and to display the Sackville family's wealth and status.

As for its other history, Knole has many strong and significant links due to Thomas Sackville being a well-known poet, playwright and linguist as well as a lawyer and courtier.

Thomas arranged the marriage between his grandson (Richard, 3rd Earl of Dorset) to Lady Anne Clifford - it was not a happy union, and Lady Anne went on to document her deteriorating relationship with her unfaithful husband and vivid descriptions of life at Knole in her surviving diary.

Charles Sackville (6th Earl of Dorset) patronised many significant literary figures of his day such as Alexander Pope, John Dryden and Matthew Prior.



The most famous literary link : 'Orlando' was written by Virginia Woolf (1928) about her lover, Vita Sackville-West, and Vita's love for her childhood home.

Due to the law of primogeniture Vita was not able to inherit Knole and so the house passed to her cousin, Eddy Sackville-West, whose novel, 'The Ruin' is similarly set at a fictional house based on Knole called Vair.

In 1946 Knole was gifted to the National Trust to be opened to the public. The private apartments were leased back to the Sackville-West family who have retained ownership of the majority of the parkland, the deer herd and the contents of the house.

There's a popular myth (heavily promoted by Vita Sackville-West) that Knole is a calendar house - with 365 rooms, 52 staircases, 12 entrances and 7 courtyards.

While fascinating, the concept is a myth ... the reality is the house was not designed and built in a single phase, but is the accumulation of several stages of construction over several periods of times.

The house though does contain around 400 rooms, 15 of which are open to the public and apparently ranks in the top five of England's largest houses, occupying a total of four acres!

And so, after wandering through these open rooms the ladies returned to the bus and travelled to Horley and the lovely old Manor House named Langshott Manor that has been converted into a hotel.

Next blog will continue on with pics of the wonderful old manor house and the happenings of the next day.

Sincerely hoping you have enjoyed looking at all the pieces of wonderful needlework housed at the home of Meg Andrews.

Till next time, enjoy creating your current needlework piece.

