



Kay Dennis Stumpwork Newsletter

Issue no 5

August 2008

Hello

We have to say that we are very sorry for the time gap between our last newsletter (November 2007) and this one. We have had a very busy year to date and the newsletter has had to take a back seat. The good thing about the delay is that we are able to report on some new and exciting ways of improving your stumpwork techniques.

Last year saw the publishing of our third book 'Stumpwork Seasons' and a rise in the number of students enrolling for our Distance Learning Courses.

If we had to highlight the most memorable occasion of last year it would have to be the presentation of a signed copy our new book 'Stumpwork Seasons' to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester at the Knitting and Stitching Exhibition at Alexandra Palace

last
September.

We were
asked by the

Embroiderers' Guild to put on a display of students work who were taking their City & Guilds course in Stumpwork with the Guild. We were also asked to have our books available and sign them if required. The Duchess was very interested in the students work and delighted with the copy of our book.



The exhibition of students work at Knitting and Stitching Exhibition

attend. It will also be available for people to print from the website. We hope you understand our reasoning behind this decision. If you would like a copy of the new catalogue and/or a newsletter please send a stamped addressed, A5 size, envelope to the address below.

Please note that we no longer have a fax machine. The last one died on us and as it was hardly used we have not replaced it.

Kay & Mike

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The Duchess of Gloucester looking at the exhibition of students work

Making Dry Stone Walls

Many of you will have made dry stone walls by either covering stone shaped bits of card with painted calico or using bits of painted egg boxes but recently both of these methods were not suitable for the subject of one of Kay's students. Both of the methods described above were too bulky for the design. The student, Marjorie Higgins and Kay spent some time with various other materials trying to achieve the perfect solution for this particular design. In the end they found that painting some undyed pieces of silk rod gave them the ideal material for the stone wall. It was pliable, could be sewn to the background fabric quite easily and could be stitched into, the effect was stunning as you can see in the photographs.



The completed embroidery

This project started with a lesson that Mike gave to Kay's Uxbridge students in using photographs ironed onto a material to be used as the background to a piece of stumpwork. Marjorie wanted to use this old house as her background but the house walls were a bit flat and did not look very realistic. By using some Xpandaprint over the brickwork it lifted the whole of the house wall away from the background material. It seems that the use of this material over the ironed on transfer gave a different effect than when used on plain fabric.



The dry stone wall made with silk rods



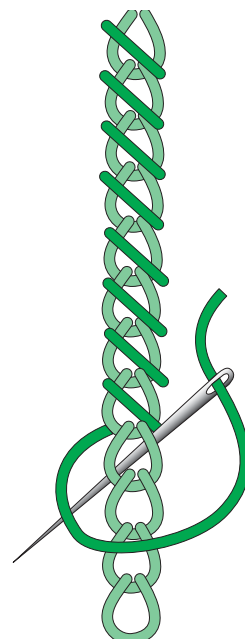
Using expndaprint to add interest to the brickwork

Whipped Chain Stitch



Use this stitch as an alternative to stem stitch, back stitch, etc for stems. The finished stitch is more bulky than the other stitches mentioned and has a rougher outer edge, making it more suitable for stems for Blackberries and Roses etc.

Make a row of chain stitches along the design line and over stitch these stitches with the same thread or a contrasting colour.



Another way of making free standing embroidered leaves.



The new way showing a much cleaner edge - This leaf was made in a hurry to show the technique.

When making free standing embroidered leaves we used to say couch a wire around the shape, fill with satin stitch and then cut as close to the edge of the stitches as possible. No matter how neat you were, there were always stray threads showing around the outside of the leaf. If you don't mind using glue, a better way to make the leaves is to embroider the leaves as you did before but instead of cutting close to the edge of the leaf try the following technique.



The old way showing quite clearly the frayed calico edges around the outside

Before starting to stitch, paint the leaf shape and approximately 1/2" outside the shape the same colour as the thread you are going to use. Cut the leaf out approximately 5mm away from the edge. Dilute some glue and paint the back of the leaf with the glue. Fold the 5mm behind the leaf and glue into place. For the purist

you could stitch the 5mm behind the leaf. Finishing a leaf this way there will be no frayed edges showing.

New exciting ways of using stumpwork

For the last six months or more Kay has been working a three dimensional walled garden using stumpwork techniques. The inspiration came from seeing Owen Davis's walled gardens at the knitting and stitching show last September. We will give more information in our next newsletter but for now we can show you some photo's of the garden now that it is finished.



Outside back wall



Outside side wall



Outside side wall



Outside front wall



More detailed photo's can be seen on our website www.kaydennis.co.uk

Product News



Pear Beads

For more months than we care to remember we have been trying to find a properly shaped pear bead. We have not found a suitable bead anywhere so we have decided to make our own. A friend of Mike's turned ten pear shapes in wood. Mike then made up a latex mould and cast the pears in resin with a hole down the centre. One was given to Kay for testing and the end result is shown in the pictures above. The pears are £1.00 for 3 pears.

Silk materials

Because of the lack of demand for these materials and the high cost of buying small amounts we have decided not to restock the silks as the stocks run out. This decision also includes the silk trial packs. We have already run out of Organza and Noil.

Needle Necessities floss

We told you in the last newsletter about the difficulties that we were experiencing with the Needle Necessities range of threads. We then found a supplier who was producing exactly the same threads and colour range as Needle Necessities. The new range is known as Threadworx but the numbers and names for the threads differ from the old Needle Necessities range. The good news was that these threads would retail at 40p cheaper than the Needle Necessities ones. That was until April when they went up in price. From April 1st 2008 all threadwork threads went up to £2.90 per skien. We shall continue supplying the Needle Necessities range until those stocks are exhausted. We have decided to reduce the price of Needle necessities range to £2.90 to make them the same price as the Threadworx. This should

make life a lot easier for everybody. Order your threads by either the old Needle Necessities number or the Threadworx number.

Fabric Marker

This fabric marker is a fine tip marker that produces a very thin bright purple line which vanished automatically in time or can be rinsed off in cold water. The harder you press the longer the line stays visible. Be aware that the marked lines only last for a maximum of 24 hours.

Prices

We have had to increase the price of Calico, needles and embroidery rings. All other prices remain as before.

Postage rates

We have looked at postage rates long and hard and have decided to stay with free postage for all UK orders except books. Postage rates were increased on April 1st so we have had to increase the cost of posting books to £1.20. All overseas orders will be charged at cost.

Because of the way in which postage is now charged we have become very inventive in the way that orders are wrapped. Where we may have used a smaller padded envelope in the past we have found that using a larger envelope keeps the package thickness smaller so that it can be sent as a large letter instead of a parcel.

Discontinued products.

We will no longer be supplying 100 gram packs of Polyester stuffing as it costs almost as much to post as the cost of the item.

Other products that are discontinued are PP1 Padding Packs and PA1 Basic Material packs. The contents of both of these items can be purchased separately

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