

Dinsdale Embroideries

www.DinsdaleEmbroideries.co.uk

Issue 1

Our First Newsletter

When it was first suggested that we had a newsletter it sounded like a good idea. That was before I realised how difficult it was to actually put one together that was readable.

Computers are supposed to make life easier, aren't they? 'Click on the style of newsletter you would like', it said. So I did. How do you make 100 words fit into the space of about 2? Hey, there's more text than that! Where's it gone? They said this was the easiest template for a beginner 'Ah, but', I hear them utter in the background, 'We didn't mean an ABSOLUTE beginner!'

Well as the saying goesWe live and learn. You will be able to judge how much I have learnt when you see the next newsletter If the computer is still in one piece by then, that is.

I hope you will find something of interest in this meagre publication. Contributions have been made to this newsletter from around the UK, the USA and New Zealand. If you have something you would like to send along for the next newsletter, then send it along using the Feedback button. There we go again ... computers and buttons ... buttons and computers.



New LOGO

This logo will be available for you when you save <http://www.DinsdaleEmbroideries.co.uk> in your favourites list.



Coming Back to Embroidery



I've been doing crewel embroidery for over ten years and I've done most of the crewel kits you can get in the U.S. Others are too basic. That's why my discovery of Dinsdale Embroideries was so wonderful. The UK is a wonderful source for new and more challenging work, and Dinsdale Embroideries offers outstanding customer service, assuring me that I won't have a long wait to begin a project.

The project I'm completing now is entitled Morning Glory and looks great so far. I'm working with thread on a sateen cloth, and I've completed the bird and a portion of the flowers. It will make a lovely picture in the back hall of my apartment. I had given up embroidery when I couldn't find anything that I wanted to complete. I'm glad I found so many lovely kits at Dinsdale Embroideries via the web. Embroidering is a nice way to ease up from a busy work day.

Helen, for the record, I really mean this. Your service was outstanding. And I've really enjoyed coming back to embroidery. I'm an editor from Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 and over, and on weekends I write business books and articles. I had stopped embroidering about five years ago because I couldn't find anything I would want to devote time to complete. Now most evenings, after dinner, I take a half hour or hour break and sew. Thank you.

Florence New York, USA



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Embroidery – Like it or Hate it?



I have to admit my reaction to a request from a neighbour, to join her at a local embroidery class was less than enthusiastic.

As a child, I made several unsuccessful attempts, never completing one project. I found sitting in one place for a very long time impossible and embroidery on the ‘hoof’ doesn’t work. I also viewed embroidery with a jaundiced eye, all crinoline ladies liberally peppered with stem, lazy daisy and satin stitches. How boring! How wrong can a person get, as I was later to discover. My judgement was made prior to becoming infected with the enthusiasm and extraordinary talents of Helen Kendrick and her amazing flair for the subject. After much thought, interlaced with trace of guilt at my reaction, I decided to give it another go. Five years on and still doing just that, with major changes. I now enjoy embroidery, having completed many and various projects and not a crinoline in sight.

I have met and made new friends, encouraged old friends to join me and opened up a whole new avenue in my already full lifestyle. I have also learned not to throw anything out, like Helen, I save the tiniest scraps of fabric and threads for future projects.

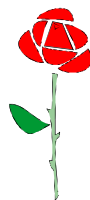
Two years ago Helen suggested an exhibition of our work in the local church. This made most of us feel a little apprehensive initially. The exhibition was a great success receiving many favourable comments from the public at large. It was an opportunity for us to see our own and the work of our friends in a new light and we were surprised at how professional the exhibits looked. We were all favourably encouraged, spurring us on to greater achievements.

Our one group has expanded to three. We are presently embarking on our second and larger exhibition, to include Hardanger, cross stitch, Japanese silk work, crewel. Mountmellick and many more embroidery projects.

As our group is now quite large we do not see each other every week, but we do get together at Christmas and for a yearly Strawberry Fayre at Helen’s house at various craft exhibitions.

If you like me have a jaundiced view of embroidery, “Give it a go”. You could catch the bug. So beware!

Pat Co.Durham, UK



A Host of Flower Threads

I am currently stitching a small sampler using flower threads. I find that the matt appearance of flower threads works especially well on samplers, when you are using a variety of stitches and would like to have a more muted effect than when using stranded cottons. I also like the effect of the threads on natural and coloured linens. I recently stitched a diamond wedding sampler for my grandparents. I stitched a large diamond in cross stitch (on linen), cross stitched their names and dates inside and then went mad with a variety of threads, beads and stitches and created floral garlands within the diamond. I used crewel wool to make spiders web roses, and used flower threads and stranded cottons for all sorts of other flowers. I used shades of lilac, pink, greens and lemons and finished off with a lace border before framing.

I am going to use my collection of flower threads to stitch a band sampler (or perhaps two!) using different stitches suitable for linen and include some drawn thread and pulled work stitches. That should keep me busy for some time!

Beverley Cumbria UK



Flower Threads

DMC Flower threads are a matt finish embroidery thread made of 100% Californian combed cotton. The natural colours and softness of DMC Flower threads make them a perfect choice for embroidery on cotton or linen fabric. Flower threads are approximately the thickness of 2 strands of stranded cotton, making it ideal for cross stitches well as other techniques. It is recommended that the lengths used should be no longer than 50cm (18”). Dinsdale Embroideries stock the full range of DMC Flower threads at 24p per 20m skein. Colour range packs of 18 skeins cost £4.14. The complete set of 180 colours costs £41.40, but remember that the 5% discount will apply on this making it £39.33. A complete set is a wonderful resource to have. Unfortunately the colour range of the complete set looks so gorgeous that it is difficult picking one out to use up!





“Write "a paragraph or two" about needlework?"

Goodness me, you really are asking the wrong person to write "a paragraph or two" about needlework. I am still very much in the beginner classification. From my observations so far, we are very traditional needleworkers here in New Zealand, Cross Stitch, Tapestry, Hardanger etc. although there are some very talented 'textile artists' appearing on the scene. One of our very talented ladies on the world scene is Jennifer Pudney, maybe you have heard of her. You can see her fun and very popular designs at www.jennifer-pudney.com Another New Zealand website you may be interested in is www.strandnz.com they produce wool/mohair blend crewel and tapestry weight yarns as well as kits. Their yarn was used in the hangings at the Globe Theatre and they produce kits which feature some of the designs.

With the help of the Internet, I have become very interested in the American needlepoint canvas style, in particular the painted canvases and all the different stitches and threads used to complete them. But deep down I must admit that I am a traditionalist and still like to do some cross stitch, petit point (tapestry) and hardanger (my favourite). I am only just starting to try the silk and metal threads and the reason I purchased the 'Peony and Butterfly' kit is because it is small and not too intimidating for a beginner as well as being absolutely beautiful. I love the look and feel of silk threads but unfortunately they are not readily available here in New Zealand. I am currently experimenting with a small hardanger project using silk pearl thread in an Ecru colour scheme, and I am really pleased with the way it is turning out. My cupboard is rapidly filling up with WIP's (works in progress) but I have also been feverishly building up my stash (mainly via the internet), I call it my retirement fund!

Imported kits etc. from the UK are quite expensive to buy in the needlework shops here and I have saved as much as 35 GBP on one kit by buying online. Also there are some things that are just not available here.

Anne Diamond Harbour, New Zealand



New Adventures

If you've ever looked through an embroidery book and thought I could never do that... well think again! Like many new to embroidery I started off doing cross-stitch kits and thought that I'd leave the more complex things to the experts. But then I started the classes at Dinsdale Embroideries with Helen.

The classes are very informal with small groups so that each participant can have individual help. Helen suggests a new style of work and will give brief history of the use of that embroidery style, often in the context of the social history of the time. Having chosen a style Helen helps us to design a piece of our own. This can either be totally free hand, or done by taking inspiration from books and using a little artistic licence. Alternatively if there is a style of work that you have a burning ambition to try, but need some help and advice then Helen is just as happy to give you help and support with it. After attending the class for the past three years I still have a lot to learn but now have the confidence to attempt those complex pieces, with a little help from my friends!

Alison Co.Durham, UK



Free Anchor Charts

There are 5 free Anchor charts to collect. One will be sent with each order while stocks last. Have you collected them all yet?

1. Blue Ribbon Rose – cross stitch
2. Everything's Coming Up Roses – cross stitch
3. Larkspur Lane – cross stitch
4. Rockabye Baby Birth Announcement – cross stitch
5. Drawn Thread Work Embroidery

When you send your next order, state your order of preference of chart on the 'Feedback page' or order form. We will send your highest preference chart, provided we still one available.



Dahlia Chart



Why not try stitching our cross stitch dahlia using Flower threads. You could use the design in a greetings card.



My Love of Gold Threads

My first encounter with gold/silver threads came when I attended a workshop at the Royal School of Needlework in London and stitched the initial 'A' in Celtic style – I became hooked. My next encounter came whilst attempting part 2 in City & Guilds and started to embroider my own design using Durham Cathedral's ceiling as my source.

This is where the gold threads came into their own. I found the different colours and textures inspirational. There was a bright ruby red thread which I cut into chippings and used to fill an awkward shape. The metal threads themselves can be textured, scrimped, curled, wavy and even plaited and can be utilised in many decorative ways to make sumptuous designs. Place two strands of jap together (the brighter the gold thread the better) inside a shape and work them round and round until you reach the middle to make an unusual pattern, as the light bounces off in different directions. Adding a border of a duller gold creates an effective mixture of colour, brightness and texture.

I have nearly finished my Durham design and I am really pleased with the effect of the variety of threads which I have used. I hope to continue working with metallic thread for many years and hope my sources never dry up.

Anita Co.Durham UK

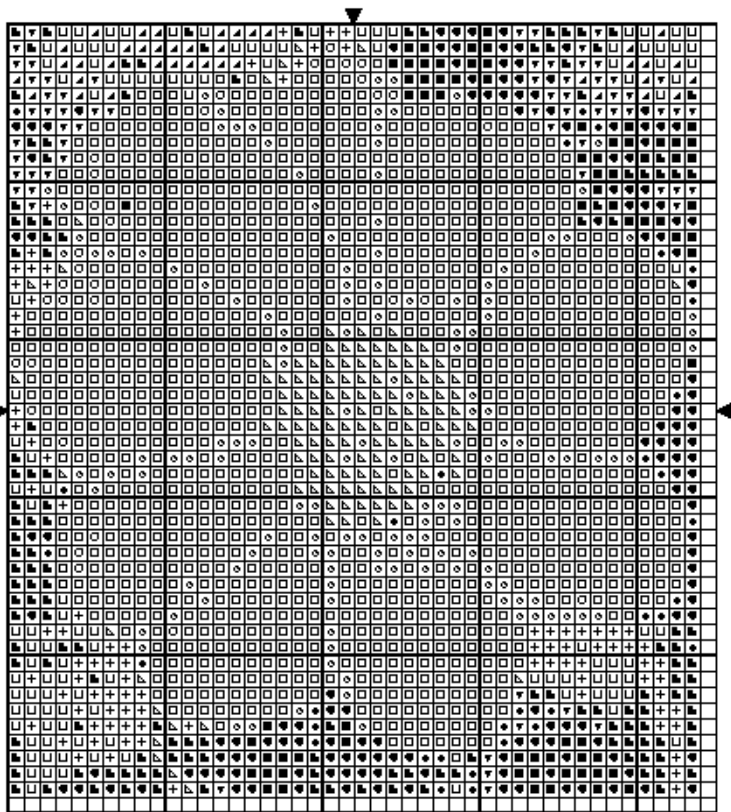


Metal Threads



Check out the metal threads available from Dinsdale Embroideries. There are gilt and silver plate threads as well as a large variety of metallised threads. An awl (or stiletto) is extremely useful in making a hole in the fabric, to allow wrapped threads (e.g. jap and rococo) to pass through without being damaged. You can find an awl on the 'Haberdashery Page', costing £1.45. Very large eyed needles are also useful – a pack of 2 'heavy embroidery needles' (one blunt ended and the other sharp) cost only 90p.

You can find some small goldwork kits to get you started on the 'Goldwork Page'. Try the Goldwork Bee (GWBE £8.90), the Goldwork Butterfly (GWBF £8.10) or the Goldwork Rose (GWRO £7.50). The 'Peony & Butterfly' uses silk threads along with some gold jap (PB £14.95).



DMC Flower threads

*2890 *2986 *2905 *2502 *2592 *2956
*2748 *2933 *2918 *2469 *2666

Madeira stranded cottons

*1705 *1312 *1403 *1707 *1201 *2706
*113 *1708 *2602 *1602 *212

What's New?



Jacobean type designs are always popular. We have 4 new designs on the Jacobean crewel page. A matching cushion and bell pull worked in stranded cottons and two pictures.

Check out the needlepoint designs – a set of 4 geometric designs incorporating metallic thread, gold ribbon, beads or charms, pastel hydrangeas that look good as a picture or a cushion and some smaller designs of birds or flowers worked in cotton threads.

We have some new magnificent cross stitch designs to make you drool – on the watery theme there is 'Fishing' for trout and 'Wonders of the Reef' (which incorporates metallic thread to make this underwater scene glisten), while on the bird theme there are 'Chickadees with pinecones' and 'Humming birds'.