



I can't believe that it is already April! My older daughter started school this year, so with all that entails, the year so far has just flown.

I've enjoyed teaching some classes already this year, and

look forward to meeting some of you at future classes this year. We also have a few new kits to introduce to you in this issue.



Yvette Stanton

new products

Mountmellick Lily runner kit

This gorgeous new runner kit (below) features tiger lilies, which were a favourite with the ladies of Mountmellick. With some specialty Mountmellick stitches, this advanced level runner will stretch your skills a bit further!



Margaret Hardanger handtowel pattern

This beginners level, traditional-style hardangersøm band pattern stretches across one end of a handtowel. While Hardanger is traditionally stitched in white on white, working in white on a pale coloured fabric (or vice versa) can sometimes assist a novice Hardanger stitcher. You could work this handtowel in white only, or with the addition of pale colour.

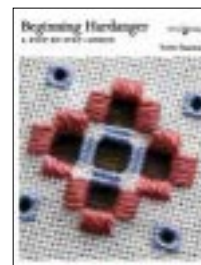


Beginning Hardanger e-book

For those of you who have internet access, we have an internet exclusive product – our first e-book! “What is an e-book?” I hear you ask. Our e-books are PDF files (able to be viewed with Adobe Acrobat). Really it is just a different way of delivering information to you.

Rather than us needing to physically print out a copy of the book and send it to you, we email it to you, and you can then read it on your computer, and print out a copy for your own personal use.

Our e-book is specifically written for those who want to learn hardanger, from the very beginning. With clear and helpful diagrams and step-by-step instructions, you will learn how to create the basic hardanger motif shown above.



embroidery classes

You are always welcome to arrange a private lesson with me, catering specifically to your needs. I am based in Hornsby, which is one of Sydney's northern suburbs. Otherwise, you may find that your needs are met by one of the following classes.

These classes must be booked through the establishment running them – unfortunately I cannot take bookings for them. Please note that this is not the final list for the year. More classes will be added as the year goes on, and some details for these classes have not yet been finalised, so stay tuned!

If you wish to see examples of the projects, they can be seen on the Classes page of our website.

Embroiderers Guild of NSW Ph: 02 9743 2501
Hardanger Embroidery, Sat April 29, May 20, 2006.

Stadia Handcrafts, Canberra Ph: 02 6255 7177
Mountmellick Embroidery, Sat June 3, 2006.

The Needlepoint, Melbourne Ph: 03 9576 1539
Mountmellick Embroidery, Sat August 5, 2006.

Bustle and Bows, Melbourne Ph: 03 9888 5018
Mountmellick Embroidery, Sun August 6, 2006.

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vetty creations online

Don't forget that if you purchase our products on our website you can use your credit card to pay for them. You can also join up for the email version of this newsletter, or read the online version.

question and answer

In this issue of NeedleNews we have a focus on Questions & Answers. If you would like to submit a question, please send it to me at the postal or email address on the front of the newsletter.

Q *When I use your mountmellick threads for my stitching I find that the untwist when I am stitching. I don't like the way this looks, so how can I stop it from happening?*

A Using Mountmellick thread is different to working with other threads such as stranded embroidery cotton or pearl cotton. To stop the thread from untwisting, you may need to regularly re-twist it. After each stitch, I usually make a tiny twist of my needle to tighten the thread. This becomes a habit after a while. You can do this, or whenever you notice the thread becoming untwisted, you can re-twist it back to its normal state.

Some people find that their thread becomes too twisted as they stitch. To stop this from being a problem, regularly let your needle hang from the thread so that it untwists until it stops.

Q *I've been working on a Hardanger project that has quite an involved needleweaving pattern. I keep finding that I get stuck in a corner. What can I do about this?*

A You should always carefully plan your path before you begin your needleweaving. If you have trouble visualising the path, get some photocopies of the chart and draw a path onto them. By using different coloured pens/pencils for each round, you can plan what parts of the pattern you will do, and in what order.

Sometimes getting caught in a dead-end can be avoided by careful planning. However, there are times when it is just unavoidable – sometimes it is the only option! When this happens you need to figure out how to get back to a point from where you can continue stitching. In my book “Elegant Hardanger Embroidery” you can find instructions on backing out of a corner on page 25 (1st edition), or page 21 (2nd edition).

View our website at www.embroidery.more.at

Q *I like one of your Mountmellick designs, but I'd really like to use my own choice of Mountmellick stitches instead of the ones you recommend. Can you suggest how I should choose where to put which ones?*

A Consider this: in Mountmellick, usually stitchers are only supplied with a line-drawn pattern. The choice of stitches and where they are placed, is left entirely to the stitcher. This scares some people greatly, but others find it to be a wonderful, creative challenge!

If you are not sure of what stitches to put where, think about the plant that you are stitching. Is it a thorny rose stem? Is it a spiky thistle? Does it have soft and downy leaves? Think about which stitches could express these textural properties. A thistle could use Mountmellick stitch which is a deliciously spiky stitch. A smooth stem could be worked in chain stitch. I'm sure you can think of some excellent ideas too.

If you are not sure – try your idea! You could try it on the edge of your fabric or a scrap if you are not confident about stitching directly onto your project itself.

Also, consider the overall effect of your stitch placement. I try to vary my stitch selection so that if there is an area of dense stitching (such as satin stitch) I put some more sparse stitching nearby. I try to balance the overall design so that there is an even spread across the whole design of heavy stitching and lighter stitching.

Q *How do you pronounce “merzka”?*

A This is word that a lot of people stumble over! It is said as follows:

mer – ezh (as in pleasure) – ka

If you're still not sure, you're welcome to give me a call and ask me to say it over the phone to you!

Q *Why is it that some publications seem to use different spellings of merzhka, such as myreshka, or myreschka?*

A It is a bit of a mystery why there are the different spellings. Because the word comes from the Ukrainian language, in translating it, some people have done so differently. Because Ukrainian uses cyrillic characters, in Ukrainian, the word looks like this:

мережка МЕРЕЖКА

On the advice of a Ukrainian speaker who is an expert on Ukrainian stitching, I prefer to use the “merzka” spelling.

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The information contained in this newsletter is general in nature and should not be relied upon. You should seek advice for your specific circumstances.